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ABSTRACT

The volume focuses on case studies conducted in France, Norway, the United Kingdom, and West Germany depicting educational provisions for handicapped young people. Interviews with 20 young adults who have recently attended special institutions show them examining their experiences and commenting on their preparation for adult life. Experiences of five young men from West Germany cite personal background, social considerations, education and traning information and plans for the future. Among conclusions noted are (1) that the physical situation of the rehabilitation centers increases the isolation and (2) that only handicapped people themselves can improve their situation. A followup study of school leavers in Norway presents case studies illustrating open employment, semi-sheltered employment, unpaid employment, and prolonged education and describing the experiences of an invalid pensioner. The case studies from England focus on a receptionist/typist, a toll-bridge keeper, and a young married couple. Social and professional profiles of six special school leavers in France present information on their personal backgrounds and present positions. (CL)

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Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI)

THE EDUCATION OF THE HANDICAPPED ADOLESCENT
IV

HANDICAPPED YOUTH AT WORK

Personal experiences of school-leavers

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Since 1978, OECD/CERI has been carrying out studies under the general title of the Education of the Handicapped Adolescent. The first publication on the theme of Integration in School was published in 1981. A second on the Transition from School to Working Life was published in 1983. A third is concerned with integration in secondary schools and entitled Integration of the Handicapped in Secondary Schools: Five Case Studies, 1985.

The present volume is the fourth in the series. Unlike the general review of policies and descriptions of practices in the previous studies, this concentrates on the experiences of young people who are handicapped. Interviews with twenty young adults who have recently attended special institutions show them looking back on their experiences and commenting on their preparation for adult life.

The individual studies used here have been taken from more extensive research projects carried out in each of four countries. The larger studies were undertaken by the Work Research Institute in Norway; IFAPLAN in the Federal Republic of Germany; CRESAS (Centre de Recherche de l'Education Specialisée et de l'Adaptation Scolaire) of the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique in France; and the National Foundation for Educational Research in the United Kingdom. An overview of the studies has been contributed by Patricia Rowan, Deputy Editor, Times Educational Supplement.

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The report is published on the responsibility of the Secretary General but the views expressed are those of the review teams and do not commit either the Organisation or the national authorities concerned.

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I

AN OVERVIEW

by Patricia Rowan

During the six years that the OECD/CERI project on the Education of the Handicapped Adolescent has been progressing, it has become gradually possible to feel optimism about developments in Member States. Attitudes about handicapped people, and concerning the nature of handicap itself, have undergone fundamental reappraisal; there have been positive examples, to record and disseminate, of programmes that promote integration into school and society, and facilitate transition from school into adult and working life.

But it is salutary to be reminded at this stage that signs of good practice should not obscure the fact that a great deal of bad practice still exists. If we are serious about the principles the project is pursuing, we must obviously listen carefully to what handicapped young adults can tell us about the quality of their lives, and the ways in which they believe they have been affected by their education and social adaptation. And any evaluation of developments so far needs to take account of clear, first-hand evidence that, even where hopeful progress has been made, it usually does not go nearly far enough.

The case studies in this book have been conducted in four different countries -- France, Norway, the United Kingdom and West Germany -- each with its own characteristic policy for developing educational provisions for the handicapped. Thus, the experiences recounted are not directly comparable, nor are they necessarily representative of what their countries have to offer.

Here, at the outset, we must take note, too, of the wide variety of impairment that has been embraced within the term "handicapped". The cases include physical disablement, mental retardation, slow learning, educational disturbances and even simple lack of adaptation to the school structure. It is to be expected, then, that of the twenty young people concerned each is very much an individual in his or her development and reaction to the services, people and opportunities (or lack of them) they have met in life. But they have two significant factors in common: they have been judged to fall among that group of handicapped young people capable of coping with employment, given additional help in the way of education and training; and they have in fact been given the chance of accepting such help.

All of our subjects were emerging into the world -- and being interviewed -- at a time when the new policies were being developed by governments alive to their importance. It was widely accepted that, since employment was the essential key to independence and self-respect, the chance of vocational training allied to continuing education must be the most important ingredient in preparation for eventual social integration. Though it could not yet be assumed that adequate strategies had been developed for those who might have to settle for significant living without work -- or even for those who fall throug the net between this group and the most employable -- at least work preparation was likely to pay the right sort of dividends.

From one group's experience of such measures, we should be able to get some indication of their success; it has to be said, however, that hardly one of the young people whose story is told here seems to have had the complete combination of education, training and support that could lead to a life offering personal satisfaction as well as competence and independence. Although the worldwide unemployment crisis has to be taken into account as a factor most likely to affect those at the bottom of the employment ladder, this was not such an over-riding feature of life even five years ago when many of the interviews were carried out.

A fair proportion of the young people involved had indeed found jobs, and in Norway in particular, these often provided motivation for training and subsequent status. Too frequently, however, they were jobs of the most menial, low-level variety, without prospects, or much more than subsistence pay, and were rather more likely to have been found through parents than official services, or as a result of training received. Moreover, such low status jobs -- even in open employment -- were seldom an open door to wide social acceptance or independent living.

Even accepting society's evaluation that they were lucky to have any sort of job at all, these young people depended very heavily on their own families for social and everyday living support, and for acceptance in the local community, with all the long-term doubts that that was bound to raise.

Most of the case studies set out here were conducted when the subjects were in their early twenties, so that sufficient time would have elapsed after leaving their training course to look back and assess how useful the help offered had been in preparing for the normal life they craved for.

One of the strongest messages we have from the lips of these young people is that they do have all the normal hopes, dreams and urges of others in their age group for a job, home, family, friends and fun; the chance to go shopping, to the cinema and on holiday, to take part in sports, and travel, the same as everybody else. At the same time, however, they have few expectations that they will get those same choices and chances; they tend to accept the negative assessments of those around them.

If this simple and fundamental goal of social integration shows so little evidence of being achieved, this ought to tell us something about the all-round value of the programmes designed to help the twenty, and others like them.

I would suggest that if we draw together the threads of individual experiences, two lessons can be identified. The first is that it should not be assumed that it is desirable or possible to separate personal and social needs from capacity for work when planning a programme aiming towards a full adult life. The strands are inextricably linked and equally important; work preparation is unlikely to be really effective unless it includes social preparation. A well-balanced curriculum at transition needs to include communication skills as well as motor skills, social as well as vocational competences, aesthetics as well as arithmetic.

The second lesson goes further. It has also to be accepted that if little is done about any of these ingredients until the time of transition, then it may already be too late. Special programmes then may help those most likely to benefit, but they are unlikely to be enough. More than this, these stories of twenty young people -- some of them handicapped as much by their own environment as by disability -- suggest that policies leading towards social integration would have needed to shape far more of their lives than the years between 14 and 19 to have any chance of success.

The implications go back through their education. Even those who were nominally integrated into ordinary schools found that they were far from integrated in practice. For those in special schools there was the familiar story of a warmer, friendlier, but essentially more cosseting environment, taking little account of any need to foster independence or grown-up behaviours. And in both sorts of school there was the same story of low expectations leading in a downward spiral to underachievement. In the majority of the stories, there is a pattern of poor education and performance below IQ prediction.

This has meant that, whatever the deficiencies in attainment made inevitable by learning disabilities, they have been exacerbated rather than compensated for. Instead of the extra educational support arguably desirable to help slow learners catch up with their age group, sights have been set even lower than they might have been.

The question then arises how far this lost ground can be made up in transitional programmes. The intention has certainly been there in some of the case studies, but it is questionable how successfully. The young people themselves certainly had differing views about the value of their chances to improve in educational terms, and they did not always coincide with those of their teachers. A few did appreciate the extra education or accept that it might be of long-term benefit, but others -- and especially the boys -- were interested only in the vocational training that they hoped would lead to a job, and tended to think anything else a waste of time.

In a minority of cases, the chance of training and work experience did lead to just the right job, and turn out to be the key that could unlock the future; and finding (and mastering) work in the open market did occasionally provide a motivation, previously lacking, to seek the literacy and numeracy which now clearly had a point. The fact that several young men were struggling to conceal from workmates their lack of reading skills, while persevering with literacy classes on their own initiative, said more for their own determination than for the education systems that had let them down.

A trickier question raised in the Norwegian report is how far it is realistic to pin faith indefinitely on further education. Perhaps it has to be accepted that a ceiling can be reached, beyond which renewed attempts simply postpone decisions about the future, and become dispiriting rather than hopeful. This further emphasizes the absolute necessity to tailor support and service to individual needs; it was in fact this sort of flexibility that stood out in the Norwegian stories.

On the whole, what seemed to matter most to all of the young people when they talked about their experiences on further education courses was the value of the vocational training, and the quality of their social life on the segregated, usually residential, courses.

It is fair to say that success stories in these pages are pitifully few when it comes to matching training received to a permanent job, though dashed hopes could be ascribed to a variety of causes, ranging from unrealistic expectations and poor guidance to inadequate provision and lack of local job opportunities. The French case studies in particular show a mismatch between the limited curriculum and training choices available and the labour market and, though the Norwegians did provide a more effective link between training, employment services and local jobs, it was everywhere more likely that jobs would be found -- or created -- through family or individual effort.

Since most of these jobs were lowly and badly paid, they did little to enhance already limited social lives. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the English and Norwegians especially looked back rather wistfully to the social side of their residential courses. The social advantages of that segregation: the care, companionship and secure understanding it offered; the considerable disadvantages: a society where they only saw other handicapped people, and the lack of preparation to be self-sufficient contributing members of society.

Such isolation was nowhere felt more keenly than by the physically disabled young Germans, intellectually able, provided with high quality education and training, but always cut off on an inaccessible hill outside the town. Their spirit in the face of an apparent national inability to accept disabled people on equal terms was remarkable (and may even have contributed to their will to succeed), but practical obstacles to an integrated life remained considerable.

To the Germans it seemed that their society was adding to their physical disabilities the further handicaps of access, geography and attitude. So far as the English, French and Norwegian case studies are concerned, the accounts that the young men and women give themselves of the isolation and lack of variety in their lives suggest how important a component of education social preparation ought to be, whether or not traditional further education and vocational preparations are particularly relevant.

Even where the young people are equipped to compete for jobs on the open market, widespread unemployment could make social isolation just as likely for this group as for the least employable. This isolation, leading inexorably to depression, lack of self-confidence and poor self-image, is almost certainly the worst problem to threaten any of the young people talking here. It can afflict even the few who have found the right job or marriage, especially where there is lack of support in pregnancy and a continual

struggle for respect as a working adult, and for most it will intensify as they grow older and gradually lose family support. Arguably, then, training for living is as important as training for work. Independent travel is an especially essential skill to develop if friendships are to be kept going (especially where school or college was residential), but practice in other social skills that will help relationships at work and outside it probably demand a truly integrated education as much as special instruction.

Beyond that, it is necessary for both disabled and able-bodied members of society to believe that everyone is entitled to live, work and be responsible for their own lives. Maybe those often-overlooked rights to self-determination and freedom, and all the smaller rights that make life worthwhile, should be included in the goals for programmes of social and life skills, but it is difficult to detect much sign of them in these case studies.

One key to independence that is not irrelevant in this context is the ability to drive, mentioned both by the Norwegians and Germans. This could depend on state assistance, like the right to special transport for non-drivers, but also helps to underline the restrictions on social life and travel that a low-income job inevitably imposes, especially where there is a family to support. That must remain an obstacle to independence so long as disabled people are expected to settle for the least that society can offer in the way of occupation.

There is one other key factor that seems to arise in many of the case studies, and that is the quality of advice and information -- or often lack of it -- offered at turning points in a career. There can be little dispute how vital appropriate advice and counselling is to a handicapped child's parents throughout schooling, and to the young person concerned well into adult life, but the evidence here is that it is often missing, inadequate or even misleading, at the most vital times. And, more often than not, it is not thought worth consulting the young person about decisions that will affect his or her own life.

Even educated, middle-class parents had difficulties in finding suitable schools, and it was often only chance that led them to a further education or training course. For their children, subsequent disappointment stemmed as much from misinformation about course content and unexpected hurdles as it did from subsequent failure. It was evident not only that career guidance needed to be more regular, consistent and geared to individual needs, but that adequate follow-up should be continued much longer into adult life.

In the French studies, a high proportion of those recommended for Special Education Section courses at transition had not even been assessed as having the appropriate IQ, and for the majority handicap was associated with social factors or the school curriculum rather than any individual handicapping condition (the same might be said of the two young Germans with behavioural problems). For the French boys and girls, the unsuitability of the transitional schooling might, in the circumstances, have been exacerbated by the fact that it ended at 16, while it was clear that subsequent career advice failed to make up lost ground for a group who, on the face of it, were more moderately handicapped than those of the other nationalities.

Parents in all four countries could also have benefited from more advice about what was possible in the way of personal independence for their children, and what physical, financial and educational support was available. The children needed more of that sort of advice too as they grew up, as well as information about their right to allowances and to participate in decisions about their own future, in full knowledge of the possibilities and opportunities. The concept of a "named person", to be a source of such advice and support, which was developed in the Warnock Report on Special Educational Needs in the United Kingdom, still urgently awaits fruition there and further afield.

It is still very rare to give handicapped young adults the chance to speak directly for themselves, and rarer still to listen.

It is all too easy to lose sight of the individual when planning services for those who are handicapped. Administrators and professionals need criteria, categories and defined fields of operation but each individual's response to a disability is unique. There is always tension between systems and procedures and the optimum programme for meeting personal needs. International co-operation in the field of education, vocational preparation and social services for those who are disabled is often dominated by the former and too little attention is paid to the consumer. This book is a modest attempt to accord individual experiences recognition; to show that among complex major issues, the single voice is not entirely swamped by the discussion of national policies and systems.

During transition to adult and working life, it is essential that these young people should be active participants in planning their future and not passive recipients of society's institutionalised charity. It is equally important that such individuals should be recognised as potential contributors to the community in which they live with the same human aspirations as everyone else.

II

TRAINING AND JOBS FOR THE DISABLED IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: THE EXPERIENCE OF FIVE YOUNG MEN

Abridged from Case Studies by Marlis Stoffels

The aim of the case studies is to document the many varied measures that are being taken nowadays to improve the lot of those who are handicapped and to learn how a sample of five such young people regard the situations in which they are now living.

Each of these five is handicapped in a different way; all have direct, personal experience of the various forms of rehabilitation facility now offered in Germany. In their interviews, they reveal how far these arrangements met their individual needs.

I. REHABILITATION POLICY IN GERMANY

Since the late 1960s, the social problems of handicapped people have given rise to wide-ranging reforms, with two main aims:

i) Restructuring and expanding of the basic legal provisions;

ii) Setting up of comprehensive facilities to promote rehabilitation.

The legal reforms aim to co-ordinate and harmonize measures promoting the medical, vocational and social rehabilitation of handicapped people and, in addition, to improve job integration prospects.

The objectives of these reforms have not been fully attained; for example, the responsibilities of the various bodies remain linked to the cause of disablement; but one positive advance has been the active role in vocational rehabilitation taken by federal employment services. Now they are legally required to fill the gaps in cases where no other body is responsible.

The network of special schools has been widely expanded but there is still an insufficient number of places to meet the needs of children with specific forms of disability. Moreover, in most cases, special schools lead only to the certificate of compulsory education (often in the form of a special certificate for the educationally subnormal or the mentally handicapped) or, in fewer cases, to an intermediate secondary level certificate. There are very few special schools offering access to higher education.

Youngsters at these special schools generally have to live in as boarders. There are some schools whose facilities are suited to the needs of the handicapped and where, in particular, the physically handicapped, the visually impaired and the hard of hearing are taught in the same class as their non-handicapped peers; these schools, however, are few.

Vocational Training Centres for Young People who are Handicapped

Practice has shown that comparatively few handicapped school leavers are taken on for training by private industry. This is chiefly because of their limited capacity and because they have to be provided with special facilities (e.g. toilets, writing aids). It was against this background that the vocational training centres for them were set up.

The training provided by these rehabilitation facilities falls within the national "dual system" (a linked work-and-training system) and conforms to the Vocational Training Act (1969). This Act lays down that training may only be given in trades or professions recognised by the State. The only departure from the "dual system" is that both the day release and the practical parts of training (otherwise carried out on the job) are performed under the same roof to facilitate the co-ordination of these two elements.

The national objective is a network of 24 of these vocational training centres providing training and accommodation for 7 000 handicapped young people. For some -- in particular the physically handicapped -- these centres offer the only possibility of vocational training.

One advantage of these centres is that, alongside vocational training, further medical and social rehabilitation measures are offered. A negative aspect of these centres is that the young people are uprooted from their environment and have to spend a number of years as boarders. In these somewhat artificial circumstances, they are likely to remain quite unaware of the problems awaiting them when they get out into the world.

As to the syllabus, the options offered are very limited. Of the approximately 450 recognised trades or professions, only 46 can be acquired. In addition, however, training is offered in a few "special handicapped professions" (exceptions to the Vocational Training Act). The content of these special professions is defined by the local Chambers of Commerce, Crafts and Industry, and they have been widely criticised. The German Federation of Trade Unions, for example, objects because the standards, and therefore the qualifications, offered by these courses tend to be low, and the young people concerned often end up as unskilled workers in dead-end jobs.

II. CASE STUDIES TAKEN FROM VARIOUS TYPES OF REHABILITATION PROVISION

1. KURT: INTEGRATION IN A NORMAL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

The School

Kurt's school at the time of his interview was the Freiherr-von-Stein school in Hessisch Lichtenau (which is 25 kilometers from Kassel). It is a comprehensive school which makes provision for the final stage of upper secondary education. For over twenty years, physically handicapped pupils have been taught in the same classes as the unimpaired. Total attendance is 1 470 of whom 80 are physically handicapped. At the upper secondary level, there are 31 disabled in a total of 269.

Also in Lichtenau (three kilometers out of town) is an Orthopaedic Clinic Rehabilitation Centre run by a charitable religious organisation. This has accommodation for the trainees at the Centre's workshops and it also houses physically handicapped pupils from the Freiherr-von-Stein school. Kurt has been living there for ten years.

Personal Background

Kurt, 22 at the time of the interview, is one of the "thalidomide children". He is dependent on his wheelchair, having no legs, although he can just about manage to walk with the aid of artificial limbs.

When very young, his hands and feet were frequently operated upon; he has, therefore, had to spend much time in hospital. He only gradually became conscious of being disabled; first noticed it between the ages of three and four, playing with other children. However, he has learned to cope with the years and now can manage, more or less, everything himself, and is very independent.

Up to the age of 12, he attended a special school for the physically handicapped in his hometown, Mainz. He showed ability there and his parents decided to move him to an ordinary school that would accept him. The nearest they could find was Freiherr-von-Stein (200 kilometers away) with the disadvantage that he would have to live in a home for the disabled.

Education and Training

In his ten years at Freiherr-von-Stein, Kurt has not only completed general secondary education, entitling him to university entrance, but has also gained a vocational training qualification under the "dual system".

It is unusual for pupils in full-time attendance at school to have both a general (academic) and a vocational qualification. Kurt was given this opportunity through an EEC-sponsored pilot project that enables pupils to take both a certificate leading to certain categories of higher education (Fachhochschule) and at the same time train as a qualified office clerk.

This project was introduced just after Kurt had taken his certificate of intermediate secondary education where his results were not good enough for him to have continued at grammar school level. Without this assistance, he would have had to leave school and the job prospects for disabled youngsters leaving school with just the intermediate certificate are not very rosy.

When the pilot project was set up, it was possible to switch from the vocational to the general stream. This is what Kurt did after the twelfth year. So, having taken his qualifications as an office clerk, he went on to do the Abitur with such good results that he believes he has a real chance of finding a job. As we shall explain later, he has already applied for entry to the University of Marburg to study law.

According to Kurt, being in a class along with the able-bodied taught him to assert himself. At the school, the disabled are assessed by the same criteria as the rest so one can only really gain acceptance if one competes directly with them -- that is, without claiming any special allowance for one's disability. This, though, does not mean rejecting any of the remedial provisions that are the very basis for effective integration: in his case, writing aids in class tests.

He also recalls that during his time at school the ordinary pupils came to approach their disabled classmates in a more natural way. Being with them at close quarters made them realise that all at the school have the same problems and the same interests. As a result, "we all got along very well".

The Social Situation

In the Rehabilitation Centre, Kurt lives in a self-sufficient group of over-18s. He and his mates do their own cooking and their daily timetable of activities is their own affair as are their domestic arrangements -- washing, cleaning, shopping and so on. This however is not the general rule at the Centre but an experiment being carried out with Kurt's group alone. In other groups, life normally runs according to a set plan.

Kurt's main criticism of the Centre is that it is on a hillside, three kilometers out of town and that only disabled people live there. These things make it very difficult to come into contact with people who are not disabled and discourages visits from one's schoolfriends. He also feels that the general run of people there are not given enough encouragement to be independent -- his own group being the single exception. In his own words "everything is dished up for you on a plate. This only makes it all the harder when you leave the home and have to do things for yourself. Or, even worse, it means you become so dependent that you cannot possibly ever live anywhere but in a home for the disabled."

Asked about his relations with people who are not disabled, Kurt said he feels he has to assert himself to be accepted by them. He has to take the first step and show what he can do. This done, people accept him very quickly. By and large, though, he thinks the disabled are not yet fully accepted by society. When he goes to a concert or some other kind of social event, he has the impression that other people tolerate rather than accept him. Only the disabled themselves, however, can change this. He is a keen basketball player and also likes dancing -- in his wheelchair, not on his

feet. He's usually around at school parties or if there's anything else going on. He's active socially and goes to the theatre and the cinema and from time to time to a disco. He has been playing for a basketball club for the past four years and frequently goes on trips with his team-mates. At weekends, he sometimes goes further afield -- to Munich or Berlin -- with friends from the rehabilitation centre. In the open with his wheelchair, he alway tries to do as much as he can by himself before asking for help. If he can't manage, then he isn't afraid to ask someone to give him a hand.

Plans for the Future

Kurt has applied for a place in the University of Marburg to study law. He chose Marburg because it has more facilities for the disabled than other universities, so the number of disabled students is relatively high. Other reasons are that the University has a basketball team for the disabled and a special residence for disabled students. Indeed, he has a lot of friends studying there.

Although he mentioned the residence for disabled students favourably, he would in fact prefer to live in an ordinary students' residence or in a flat of his own. He is independent enough to live by himself and would have no problems in doing so. However, whether or not this ambition can be realised depends on a number of financial matters still to be settled. Firstly, he hopes that the authorities dealing with his case will accept his claim for a car -- important if he is to live independently. And secondly, the problem of how exactly his studies are to be financed has not yet been worked out. It often occurs that the various authorities cannot agree on exactly which department or institution is reponsible for covering a disabled person's expenses.

If, when he goes up to university, the financial questions have not yet been settled, he will have to wait a while before his claim for a car is met. In that case, he will have no alternative but to take a room in the residence for disabled students. He expressly emphasizes, though, that this would only be a stop-gap measure until he has his own means of transport.

Nevertheless, this is not to say that Kurt is unaware of the problems of finding accommodation in an ordinary residence in Marburg. The town is full of students, and accommodation -- particularly for the disabled -- is hard to come by. But one thing is certain: he will manage somehow. He's not even too frustrated by the financial problems. He's gone through it all before.

2. OSCAR AND WILHELM: A MODERN REHABILITATION CENTRE

The Centre

Neckargemünd Vocational Training Centre, where these young men have been, is the most modern in Germany. It is part of the Heidelberg Rehabilitation Foundation (ten kilometers away) and consists of a primary school, general and vocational secondary schools, a vocational training centre

and a rehabilitation clinic. It provides a combination of extended day release courses and practical training in the workshop. "Dual system" courses are offered in business studies, electronics and engineering.

The practical parts of the business courses are carried out in "traineeship firms" (simulated work situations) and there is correspondence with similar "firms", e.g. at Mercedes Benz. There are now over 200 of these in Germany.

Ninety-five per cent of the children and young people attending the Centre live in. At the time of this enquiry, it accommodated over a thousand.

OSCAR

Personal Background

Oscar, who was 20 at the time of this study, is a spastic, who has great difficulty in controlling his movements, as well as having speech problems. He suffered brain damage at birth and his present disability developed at 18 months following an attack of jaundice. In 1978, Oscar was fitted with a cerebellar stimulator which reduced his disability by 30 per cent. He also has less difficulty in speaking. He attended a comprehensive school for the physically handicapped in his home town, Hannover, up to the tenth year, finishing with the certificate of intermediate secondary education.

He then came to the Neckargemünd Rehabilitation Centre for a three-week career orientation course, on the advice of the careers advisory service. He was offered a place on a six-month vocational training foundation course in Neckargemünd (after he had finished school) followed by a course qualifying him as an office clerk. He accepted this and is now in his third and last year of training. He has been living in the Rehabilitation Centre, Neckargemünd, for the last three years.

Training as the Way to a Job

During his course, Oscar was offered the choice of work experience in private industry or with a governmental authority. He opted for industry and spent two weeks at an electrical wholesaler's in Hannover. He has the impression that it went very well. His colleagues there told him that he should have no difficulty actually working in a company like that when he was qualified. He adapted to the pace of work and had no outstanding problems. He then enquired of management about the possibility of a full-time job when he had finished his course. The reply was a great disappointment: in view of the overall economic situation, there were no clerical posts available at the moment, the trend being to lay off staff rather than to take them on.

In Oscar's opinion, then, it is more difficult than ever at the moment, for the disabled to find a job. He is now going to apply for one with a public authority. It seems to him that this sector would offer more job security than private industry.

The Social Situation

Living in the Rehabilitation Centre has really taught Oscar to be independent. He says that at first he found it difficult to adapt to life there; it was hard, too, being so far away from home for the first time. Now, however, he feels that the years at the Centre have done him a lot of good.

He has, though, the same criticism of the Centre as Wilhelm had of the one at Freiherr-von-Stein: it offers no contact with the non-disabled. All the handicapped, he feels, have been rounded up and herded together. It's stifling. He misses going to school as he used to every day up to three years ago, meeting other people on the way. That's why he makes sure that he spends a lot of his free time outside the Centre. In the evenings, he often goes out for a walk or to a pub. At weekends, he frequently goes into Heidelberg and once a month he goes home to see his parents.

As to other people's reaction to his disability, Oscar believes this has changed over the years. As a child, he tended to feel rejected by other people. They would look into his pram with no idea of what was wrong with him. Now he has the impression that ordinary people are more open to the disabled and, for the time being anyway, he has only positive things to say about them. As we have seen, he feels it is very important to keep in contact with people who are not disabled and takes active steps to do so. He tells the tale that when he got confirmed in church, he did his best to be put into a class along with youngsters who were not disabled. It made him feel really good and the group of boys and girls (aged 13 to 15) fully accepted him. If ever he needed help, he just had to ask.

Thoughts for the Future

When he gets his qualification, Oscar intends to return to Hannover. He wants to go back there because that is where his parents and his friends are, and where he belongs to a number of clubs. For example, he is in the local disabled people's sports club and is a member of a dancing club which has both disabled and ordinary members.

He hopes to find a job in Hannover and, if he can afford it, he'd like to get a flat of his own. He feels he is capable of living by himself, provided "someone could look in from time to time to do the washing and clean up a bit". At the moment, he is learning to drive so he won't always be dependent on his parents or other people whenever he wants to go anywhere. However, Oscar realises that it will be a problem to lead an independent life if he cannot find a job.

Since the Rehabilitation Centre pays unemployment insurance contributions for the youngsters following its courses, all those who cannot find a job receive 68 per cent of the net standard wage for the profession where they are qualified as unemployment benefit for a year afterwards. After that, they qualify for unemployment or social assistance. But since both these benefits are means-tested, if Oscar were to end up without a job for a lengthy period of time, he would possibly have to be financially dependent on his parents. In this case, he would be unlikely to fulfill his dream of a flat and a car of his own.

WILHELM

Wilhelm, a paraplegic now 23, is in the final year of the electronics technician's training centre at Neckargemünd.

Personal and Educational Background

Paralysis set in when he was 12, moving steadily from feet to lower chest. Although this has since subsided somewhat, he is still bound to a wheelchair. He has had a long and painful history of hospitalisation, his last spinal operation being at age 20.

After his first three years in hospital, Wilhelm wanted to return to his former school in Osnabrück, but the headmaster refused to take back someone disabled. He was eventually accepted by the Rehabilitation Centre school at Neckargemünd after the state of Lower Saxony (his official place of residence) offered to be financially responsible. (Neckargemünd is in Baden-Württemberg.)

From age 15 until the present time, he has been at Neckargemünd, working first for the certificate of compulsory education, and then going on for a year at a (low standard) commercial school. Then came the break for his last spinal operation, after which he returned for the electronics technician's training course.

It has been clear from the outset that Wilhelm would do this training at the Rehabilitation Centre since the courses are of a high standard and similar courses in private industry are only offered by very large companies. In any case, being disabled, he would not have found it easy to get a place in an apprenticeship scheme. While at school at the Rehabilitation Centre, he had a room-mate who was just concluding his training as an electronics technician. This gave Wilhelm an idea of what the job involved and developed his interest in this field. So from a relatively early stage he was more or less set to follow in his friend's footsteps. When he has finished his course, he intends to go back to his parents in Osnabrück.

Social Considerations

When Wilhelm's paralysis set in, he was initially not at all conscious of the fact that he was now disabled. He hadn't the faintest idea of what it meant. It did occur to him now and again that he would no longer be able to run up flights of steps or climb a tree, but he tended to suppress these thoughts in the hope that he'd soon be on his feet again. Even the doctors seemed optimistic and didn't make it clear to him what the situation really was. However, sooner or later, he was forced to face the facts and come to terms with both his disability and his environment. This, he recalls, is the worst phase of all where you've really got to find out what you feel about being disabled. All of a sudden, all the things you'll never be able to do again run through your mind. This phase could lead to despair and thoughts of suicide. The most difficult thing to do was to go to places as before and carry on a normal way of life, if only because it was very tiring moving around on a wheelchair.

In this phase, Wilhelm also realised that it was very difficult to get along with his old friends. He had the impression that they were ashamed to be seen pushing him along the streets in his wheelchair. When people stared at him, his friends felt that they were being stared at too. It made things easier for them when he left for Neckargemünd.

Wilhelm has now got over this phase and no longer really feels "disabled" as such. At one point, he asked himself: What does it really mean to be disabled? Perhaps it means you can't get everywhere you want to go. But he can. For him, there is no such thinking as "I can't". He says to himself: "I'll see how far I can get and then I'll ask someone to help me."

Wilhelm likes dancing with his wheelchair. He goes to discos and recently he was at a dance at the local rifle club. He usually finds that the first time he goes on the floor, everyone else stops dancing, but when they see that he's mastered the art of wheelchair dancing down to a tee, they think no more about it.

Nevertheless, Wilhelm is sure that anyone in a wheelchair has got to assert himself to gain acceptance. You can't just resign yourself to your fate; you've really got to make your presence felt. That's half the battle.

Wilhelm compares his role to that of development aid: he has got to help society and people who are not disabled to see the disabled in a different light. He thinks the Year of the Disabled was a load of rubbish. He says it's just like appeals in aid of needy children with the disabled portrayed as wretched creatures crying out for help. People give a donation and think they've done their bit. The funds raised are then used to finance the building of ghettos where the disabled are all locked up and kept off the streets.

This is Wilhelm's main criticism of homes such as the Rehabilitation Centre in Neckargemünd. Another is the fact that they teach the disabled to be dependent on others. Help is forced on you whether you like it or not. Once, for example, he had to keep to his bed for a while. Afterwards, he felt rather weak and had to ask one of the nurses to help him into the bath. As he was about to wash himself, however, the nurse took the sponge out of his hand and started to scrub him, insisting that it would be quicker that way, although he was perfectly capable of doing it all himself.

The same criticism applies to the leisure activity programme at the Centre since it totally discourages the residents from acting on their own initiative. With everything dished up to them on a plate at the Centre, they don't even need to go outside the gate. This, he feels, is the worst thing about living in a home: being able to live there, cut off from everything else, without ever having to leave. His idea of integration is a different one: centres like Neckargemünd shouldn't even be built in the first place. Instead the money should be used to adapt normal schools to the needs of the disabled. Then they could go to normal schools and non-disabled children would soon get used to them as being nothing out of the ordinary.

Thoughts for the Future

Wilhelm has been looking for a job in Osnabrück for when he's

qualified, but so far with no luck. He says he would be delighted to find one but is not really seriously counting on it. In the present economic climate, with staff being laid off rather than being taken on, it is even more difficult as a disabled person to get employed.

At first, he will live with his parents, especially since they have carried out some alterations to their house, making it more suitable for his particular needs. In the meantime, he has made some new friends in Osnabrück and is looking forward to going back there.

As is doubtless the case with many disabled people, he has had a number of problems with his parents and, as he says, as a disabled child you're bound to be mollycoddled by your family. They insist on doing everything for you, making it very difficult to assert your own independence. He has worked on his parents and they are now more willing to accept the fact that, despite being bound to a wheelchair, he can lead a life of his own, have his own interests and hobbies and he does not need them to watch over him all the time.

3. FRITZ AND ERIC: A PEDAGOGICAL AND THERAPEUTIC CENTRE

The School

The Pedagogical and Therapeutic Centre -- or the "PTC" -- was set up in Hannover in 1978. It is an all-day school, outside the standard national system. The staff includes not only special school teachers but social workers as well. Its aim is to promote the development of children and youngsters with disturbed behaviour so that they can either return to a normal school or integrate smoothly into working life. For the most part, the pupils have been transferred from ordinary schools who could not cope with them. The PTC goes up to the ninth year, concluding with the certificate of compulsory education. It normally has about 200 pupils. There are no boarding facilities.

FRITZ

Personal Background

Fritz was 17 at the time of interview. He attended the PTC from 1978 to 1980. After four years at primary school, he attended a number of different comprehensive schools in Hannover. He had a long history of being bullied and a lack of will to adapt himself to situations and exert himself: "...can't sit still for two minutes and work at something which might be even the slightest bit frustrating or disappointing."

His behaviour has been attributed to his relationship with his grandmother. He has been living with her for as long as he can remember and has been completely spoiled by her. Apparently, she would give him anything he asked for. When he asked for a motor-assisted bicycle at the age of 15, he got one. When he asked for a bigger one, he got it. Then he wanted a moped

instead -- and he got one. After a while he wanted a small motorbike and he got one. And now he wants to sell the small motorbike in exchange for a bigger one. He hoped he'll get that too.

The staff at the PTC tried to change the grandmother's behaviour, impressing upon her that he should only be given presents as a reward for having achieved something, such as doing better at school. But their arguments fell on deaf ears.

Fritz never knew his father who died when he was very young. His mother lived apart -- an alcoholic now dead -- and Fritz is still living with his grandparents and his aunt. Since his mother's death, his sister has also been living with them. He has never had a room of his own. For ten years, he had to share one with his aunt. They slept together in a double bed. Three years ago, he moved into the living room which he now shares with his sister.

Schooling

At the PTC, just as at his former school, Fritz was at first pushed around by everyone else. It wasn't until he started "messing around with the rest of them" that things changed. But since they fooled around all the time, they didn't learn very much. It hadn't been so rowdy at his old school. On the other hand, the standards there had been higher and he couldn't keep up anyway. At the PTC, lessons were easier and he could have kept up, but since they all "messed around all the time", he didn't learn a thing there either.

Apparently Fritz's class was a very difficult one. The school was going through teething problems and everything was at sixes and sevens. It only had pupils other schools had wanted to be rid of. Fritz's class was particularly aggressive and many of the pupils weren't in the least interested in learning.

Fritz was not given any particular therapy treatment at the PTC. Pupils were motivated by active participation in class projects -- such as running their own school magazine or repairing a bicycle -- and their overall development fostered by teaching in smaller groups of twelve.

Vocational Training

When he left the PTC, Fritz went to Celle for the vocational preparation year. The job centre told him he might as well do this since he had no prospects of finding a job anyway. Here he first of all spent three weeks getting an idea of eight different job categories and what each particular job entailed. Then he had to choose three categories which he studied in greater detail. Finally, he had to opt for one job, and in this he was given some basic training.

Fritz chose gardening. This, however, was not a decision he had just come to in the course of this vocational preparation year. He had always wanted to be a gardener. (During the vocational preparation year, the youngsters lived in. Fritz said he was glad to get away from his grandmother for once.) The preparation year finished, Fritz started the basic vocational year in Hannover, specialising in horticulture and forestry. This corresponds

to the first year of training in the "dual system" and the pupils attend full time. You cannot be taken on as an apprentice gardener without having completed it.

The basic vocational year carries on in level and standard from where the certificate of compulsory education leaves off. So pupils are expected to have reached this level, even if, like Fritz, they haven't actually passed the certificate examination.

It was really very difficult for Fritz to keep up with the rest of his class and he realised he would need coaching if he was ever to get through the year. He is now being coached by his former teacher and his marks have improved. Although he's not expecting any wonders in his final results, at least he's got through the year and is due to finish in the summer.

Job Prospects

Fritz recently applied for three gardening jobs but was rejected for all. His former teacher then went along to one of the nurseries and persuaded the owner to take a look at him before turning him down simply on the basis of his poor academic performance.

Fritz then spent four of the "practical days", laid down in the curriculum of the basic vocational year, working there and the owner was then prepared to take him on. What changed his mind was an appreciation that Fritz was very reliable, had a sense of responsibility and could do things quickly and efficiently. Above all, he had the impression that he would "keep at it even if the boss wasn't around".

Fritz says that what he learned during the basic vocational year has certainly been of help. He already has a grasp of the basic gardening techniques.

When he starts at the nursery and gets some money together, he wants to move out of his grandmother's flat into a place of his own. Although he's only 17, he hopes that the youth welfare officer will approve his application when he hears of the cramped conditions at his grandmother's.

ERIK

Personal Background

Erik started at the Pedagogical and Therapeutic Centre in 1978. He says he was sent there because of his antics at his previous school. These ended up with a bomb scare. Not having done his homework, he phoned the school and told them a bomb was going to go off; so the entire school was sent home for the day. He played this trick twice again before he was caught and expelled.

According to Erik, it was really hard for him to keep up at his old school. There was a lot of pressure put on the pupils, they had no personal

contact with the teachers, and he always got left behind. At the PTC, on the other hand, he got on much better, at least in his first year at the school, he kept up with the rest of his class and his marks were at least average. He found the workgroups very good (he was in the gardening one) and said "you could learn a lot without realising it and it was great fun doing things in a team".

He admits that they "got up to a lot of nonsense in his class, especially in the second year, and it was this that led him to being expelled for a second time. He was always (literally) playing with fire (he called it "just fooling around a bit with matches") and the local fire brigade had to be called on and paid several times. The last straw was when he heated a poker in an open fire and held it to the neck of one of his classmates. He says he didn't really mean to do anyone any harm, he was "just fooling around". He was immediately sent home. On the way there, he threatened to crash the car by fouling up the steering; but he had second thoughts and both he and his teacher survived -- Erik was to be sent thereupon to a psychiatric clinic for children in Göttingen. His teacher said it was difficult to decide whether or not Erik should be expelled. On the one hand, she didn't want just to give up and get rid of him, but on the other, he was so disruptive an element in class as to make lessons virtually impossible. What turned the scales, however, was his urgent need of therapy, and that could not be provided at the PTC.

Asked why he used to carry on like that, Erik replied that it was to "get rid of his aggression". Largely on account of his father, an alcoholic who used to beat him without mercy, "life was bloody awful and he was fed up with everything, didn't give a damn anyway. If there was anything in the way, he just kicked it over or jumped up and down on it and in general played the madman."

After the Pedagogical and Therapeutic Centre

At the psychiatric clinic for children in Göttingen, Erik lived for the first time away from home. He had his own room and could watch TV or listen to records. He didn't have to be in 'til 9 o'clock or sometimes even 11 o'clock if he liked. He didn't go to school but was given remedial teaching in the clinic. He says they worked on him to build him up so that he'd be able to go back to school. He had lessons in English and all the other main subjects. He was also given therapy.

Erik feels that his time in Göttingen did him a lot of good. It was as if all his feelings of aggression had been blown away and scattered in the wind. He came to grips with himself and life no longer seemed so awful.

Back Home

After he had been a year at Göttingen, however, Erik's mother came suddenly to take him home. Erik had always been the family's "whipping boy" with all the family's aggression being vented on him, and once he had gone, his parents had to fight out their aggression between themselves. The situation became so unbearable for Erik's mother that, not having the courage to apply for a divorce, she wanted her son back home. As a result of the

conflict between father and son, Erik closely identified with his mother, so immediately packed his bags and went with her.

Erik makes no bones about it being awful to be back home again. At first, his family treated him as if he were an invalid and actually waited on him; but before long, his father was back on the bottle and they were constantly at loggerheads again.

After two months at home, he went to "Arbeit und Leben". This is a union-sponsored organisation and one of its functions is to provide young people who have left school with no qualification to recover lost ground and take the certificate of compulsory education. But here he got up to his "pranks" again -- for instance, slashing a sofa open with a knife (a return of his aggression, he said). He was about to be thrown out, but apologised and was given one last chance. At the last minute, he managed to scrape through his exams.

The Future

When he left school, Erik had no idea what he wanted to do. But he had a lot of spare time on his hands, so he enquired about a part-time job at a butcher's where his sister worked. He got this and liked it well enough to want to train as a butcher. The management agreed to this and he was due to start as an apprentice shortly after this interview.

He intends to stay on at home. He still fights with his father although he's now off the bottle after four spells in a clinic and doesn't beat Erik up any more. Erik says he wouldn't stand for that anyway nowadays, and if anything serious were to happen he would report his father to the police.

III. SOME CONCLUSIONS FROM THE GERMAN CASE STUDIES

The cases represent a very diverse range of life histories and demonstrate that every handicapped person must come to terms with his or her particular problem in terms of specific personal circumstances. However, as we have been looking at their reactions to the help offered them by a number of special schools or institutions, we do find a communality of attitude (mostly critical) of the state/voluntary effort made on their behalf. It is only just that we should conclude by rounding this up and explaining what is being objected to:

-- Handicapped people are isolated so that they may be integrated

The overall aim of all rehabilitation measures is integration, but to attain this, the handicapped must first be taken out from the normal educational and vocational establishments, the length and degree of this separation varying. For a child, handicapped from birth, it can begin very early on. Prolonged confinement in hospital then leads to an initial exclusion from normal social

surroundings. The next step is usually the attendance at a special kindergarten, then a special school and then a special establishment for vocational training, if indeed this last possibility exists at all. There is often a break from home resulting from attendance at these special schools and institutions, and children and adolescents may have had to live solely with other handicapped people for ten years or more.

-- The situation of the Rehabilitation Centres increases the isolation

Those living in the Rehabilitation Centres are not merely removed from their previous social environment: the very location and nature of these centres separates them yet further from everyday life. Typical of most is that they are beautifully situated on mountain slopes on the outskirts of small towns. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for severely handicapped people to leave the centres without outside help. Further, the wide range of recreational activities offered in these centres encourages a passive attitude towards venturing outside.

-- The "ghetto-like" experience of handicapped people living in isolation

It is, we believe, only the most severely physically-handicapped young people who see their separation in this way. The impression that they have been "deliberately removed from the streets" is, perhaps, too subjective.

-- Isolation stigmatises the handicapped

The nature of this particular support for handicapped people presupposes that they have been defined as "different" and "not quite normal" from the very start. Such terms as disturbed, ESN (educationally sub-normal), disabled, blind, deaf and so on, certainly label them and in so doing, leave them open to discrimination.

The labelling of an adolescent as "disturbed" necessarily implies his deviation from the accepted rules of behaviour, difficulties in upbringing and education and his inability to conform to society's conditions and requirements. Such labelling often has consequences for the individual who has left school even if the term itself is no longer in "official" use outside the education system. Those, though, who have once been marked as disturbed, mostly find only poorly qualified jobs, are more frequently hit by unemployment and not uncommonly turn to a life of crime even if, as in our own case histories, this need not necessarily occur.

With physically handicapped and blind people their labelling automatically implies being dependent and requiring help. Here the effect of the charity system is not to be underestimated; contributions are appealed for on the grounds of this very lack of

independence. To be stamped as needing help means, however, that one is not accepted as an equal.

-- Only handicapped people themselves can improve their situation

This statement concerns above all those who have a permanent handicap and who have to find a way to deal with it. They have learnt that nothing could be altered until they asserted themselves. They themselves had to take the first step, after which they were acknowledged and accepted. This initial step cannot come from the non-handicapped because inevitably they find it difficult to behave normally with disabled people.

Evaluation

Much has been done to improve the educational and vocational chances for handicapped people. They would never have attained the possibilities they enjoy in the special institutions had they remained in the normal educational establishments. What we have revealed, however, is that the integration of handicapped people into society is not going to be furthered by these special means and good intentions. An Israeli recently visiting the special institutions for the disabled in West Germany gave the reason why. "You do everything you can for your handicapped people," she said, "but not with them."

III

A CASE STUDY OF FIVE LEAVERS FROM BIRKELID SCHOOL -- NORWAY

Abridged from a Report by Kari Marie Helle, Work Research Institute, Oslo

1. BIRKELID SCHOOL: CLIENTELE AND THE TRAINING OFFERED

Birkelid school is a state-run boarding school for 70 to 80 mentally retarded pupils, aged 7 to 19, in the southern part of Norway, near Kristiansand. It consists of several classroom buildings and smaller houses where the children live. It is set in the countryside with farms and smaller, private family houses.

Birkelid was rebuilt in 1971 from a compulsory primary and secondary school. The purpose was to develop a curriculum for further education, giving young, handicapped students learning opportunities for at least three more years, to enable them to take their place in normal society. Employment, open or sheltered, was stated as the ultimate objective.

Clientele

In Norway, it is now official policy to integrate handicapped students in the normal schooling system whenever possible. The pupils coming on to Birkelid, therefore, present a rather wide and complex variety of special problems. In addition to mental retardation, many of them have emotional and social disturbances which give rise to behavioural problems. The variety and incidence of the problems that have to be dealt with are shown in Tables 1 to 4. The data come from a diagnostic study conducted in 1979.

Training

The training methods, for the three-year further education course (aimed, as already said, at integrating pupils in normal society) are based on two main principles:

-- Adaptation to working life is a vital part of the process;

-- The training must give realistic experience of how to live and manage in a normal, everyday world.

Table 1

GENERAL IQ (TERMAN-MERILL TEST)

IQ Result	Pupils	%
40 - 49	6	8.3
50 - 59	18	25.0
60 - 69	21	29.2
70 - 79	15	20.8
80 - 89	6	8.3
90 - 99	3	4.2
100 -	3	4.2
TOTAL	72	100.0

N = 72; M = 67.8

Note: More than half of the pupils functioned below their general ability in a school setting; 12 had considerable, and 17 moderate, language difficulties; 29 had considerable, and 17 moderate, reading difficulties.

Table 2

MEDICAL PROBLEMS
(percentage)

Diagnosis	No Problem	Moderate Problem	Severe Problem
Brain disfunction	34 - 47	24 - 33	14 - 20
Sight problem	19 - 26	30 - 42	23 - 32
Hearing loss	55 - 76	13 - 18	4 - 6
Physical disability and disease	55 - 76	7 - 10	10 - 14

Table 3

BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS

Problem	Pupils	%
Aggressive behaviour	30	42
Anxiety	48	67
Hyperactivity	12	17
Neurotic behaviour	35	47
Psychotic, autistic behaviour	12	17
Enuresis	8	11
No problems	10	14

Table 4

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Problem	Pupils	%
No social deprivation	17	24
Moderate social deprivation	28	39
Acute social deprivation	27	37
TOTAL	72	100

The course starts with a "foundation" year; the main training is done in the second year and the third is the year for transfer to a more individually planned future of work and living.

All three years cover orientation in society, civil rights and responsibilities, economy, social security, home economics, cooking, sewing, practical woodwork, repairs, work training. Languages and maths are handled individually in accordance with the student's own interests and capacities.

Work training starts inside the school, in the workshops, laundry and dormitories, and the first year is seen as diagnostic. When dexterity, capacity, concentration, sociability and insight have been assessed, the aim is to provide training for suitable work relevant to the student's home district.

The pupils get a chance to train in real work with local companies, one day a week to begin with, increasing it they manage well. They have the chance of trying out more than one kind of job and in the third year go on to full-time work, when the right place seems to have been found.

Although much of the work they do is washing, running errands, or helping to carry or load, most factories and institutions do find them useful, and can offer meaningful tasks as well as the social understanding that is needed.

There is also a programme of living, to give the students practice in living on their own in a hired room or flat, so that they get a real chance of trying out life outside an institution.

II. THE FOLLOW-UP STUDY

The principal objectives of the study were to discover:

-- What kinds of lasting integration results have been achieved as a result of the Birkelid three-year course; and

-- How the handicapped pupils and their families reacted to the training period and the transition from school to working life.

Information about the special problems of the pupil and the actual training he had experienced was obtained from the files at Birkelid School. Our third source of information was the local employment exchange where we contacted the rehabilitation officers. They told us about what services our pupils had required from the employment exchange.

All the pupils who had left the work training programme at Birkelid school in the years 1973-77 were visited, and our material consists of information about 50 pupils, 30 girls and 20 boys. We have individual interviews with 30 of them.

At the time of the follow-up in 1979, 22 of the girls were between 20 and 25 years of age, as were 17 of the boys. The remainder were aged from 26 to 30.

We have two kinds of data: Facts about working situations, living conditions and marital status, and the individual life histories, the feelings and opinions of the pupils that give a picture of how the training and integration functioned. More than 60 per cent of the pupils are in some kind of permanent work, mostly in industry or in caring institutions.

We found that the boys obtained paid work, or qualified for paid work, to a higher extent than the girls. Of eight invalid pensioners among the former pupils, six are girls. It is only girls who are satisfied with unpaid work. There are no differences in school or training results that could explain this difference, which we believe mirrors the differences in available jobs for boys and girls in our society, and may also reflect different attitudes to getting paid work among girls and boys. It is very important for a boy's self-respect to have a job, whereas girls can allow themselves to live in their family doing some kind of domestic work. Even so, some of the girls working in institutions felt they did too much cleaning and washing, and were longing for more contact with patients, children and visitors.

We also found some slight differences between town and country pupils: sheltered work is more common in the country, which may be explained by the lower number of jobs available there. The country community has to construct some kind of solution if a job for the handicapped is to be made available.

The kind of handicap that seems to make it most difficult to adapt to working life is psychiatric disorder. Four of the eight invalid pensioners have psychiatric disorders, and none of the four has a job. It may also be difficult for pupils with brain damage to get paid work.

Table 5

ADAPTION TO WORK

Meaningful work	Job in normal industry	13	
	Sheltered work	7	
	Sheltered workshop	4	
	Military services	2	33-06%
	Housewife with small children	2	
	Unpaid work	5	
Trying to get meaningful work	School training	6	
	Client at the employment exchange	3	9-18%
No contact with any working situation, invalid pensioners		8	16%

Table 6

KINDS OF WORK

	Girls	Boys	Total
Mechanical industry	0	5	5
Electrical industry	3	0	3
Food industry	2	1	3
Unspecified industry	0	2	2
Old people's homes	5	0	5
Hospitals	2	0	2
Schools	2	0	2
Hotels	1	0	2
Kindergartens	2	0	2
Seaman's work	0	1	1
Domestic work	3	0	3

Table 7

WORKING SITUATION/SEX

	Paid Work	Military S. Housewife	Sheltered Work	Unpaid Work	School Training	Invalid Pensioners
Girls N=30	6 (20%)	2 (6.7%)	7 (23.3%)	5 (16.7%)	4 (13.3%)	6 (20%)
Boys N=20	7 (35%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	5 (25%)	2 (10%)

Table 8

WORKING SITUATION/REGION OF LIVING

	Paid Work	Military S. Housewife	Sheltered Work	Unpaid Work	School Training	Invalid Pensioners
Town N=20	6 (10%)	1 (5%)	3 (15%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)
In the country N=30	7 (23.3%)	3 (10%)	8 (26.7%)	1 (3.3%)	5 (16.7%)	6 (20%)

Table 9

WORKING SITUATION/HANDICAP

	Paid Work	Military S. Housewife	Sheltered Work	Unpaid Work	School Training	Invalid Pensioners	Total
Grave learning problems	8	0	6	1	3	1	19
Brain damage	1	0	1	4	4	0	10
Psychiatric disorder	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Social problems	2	3	2	0	2	2	11
Other handicaps	2	1	2	0	0	1	6
TOTAL	13	4	11	5	8	8	

III. INTEGRATION IN REALITY: FIVE CASE HISTORIES

The five case histories we have chosen represent different stages of integration, but our main purpose is to show that integration is an individual process and to give a living picture of how life seems to mentally retarded youngsters -- their hopes, joys and disappointments.

We rely mainly on data from the personal interviews, but also use information from school files and in some cases from the files at the employment exchange. Discussion and evaluation of the individual pupils were integrated into the research process as information became available to teachers and boarding school staff.

CASE 1: THOMAS -- OPEN EMPLOYMENT

Personal Background

Thomas, born in 1959, spent his childhood in a small town in the south of Norway. He was a member of a low prestige family (father as butcher was often out of work). He attended normal school, was a slow learner, and was socially isolated for "class" reasons. He left school at 16 totally unable to read. He had no medical problems or physical disorders. Thomas was referred to Birkelid by a local social agency as one having very poor chances on the labour market.

At Birkelid, Thomas showed total apathy to first-year classwork and to break this, he was found a training place in a small mechanical workshop locally. He liked this from the start and soon asked for full-time training. Birkelid considered it pointless to force more traditional schooling upon him, so he was allowed to follow the social training programme, received training in handling money, and joined the "living on your own" course while continuing to receive training at the workshop. He was respected by the other workers there who taught him to drive a car. After one year of training, Thomas got paid employment at his workshop, and he moved to a rented room outside the school area.

Thomas's Working Situation in 1979

Thomas left Birkelid school in 1976 when he was nearly 18 years old. In 1979, he was still working in the workshop where he had got his training and was recognised as being one of the ordinary staff. No one thought of him as disabled or retarded, and newcomers did not even know of the special circumstances of his training period. When Thomas had to be tested for his driver's license, he had an individual examination so that his reading difficulties should not handicap him. Thomas is very fond of his job and would not answer questions that he felt could be negative for his workshop (for example, about environment problems, heavy work, overtime, wages, union relations and the like). He is friendly and reflective in the way he speaks, but he firmly limits the interview to his private life. Work is good and the

main thing in life. It is certainly not a subject to discuss with a stranger coming from some social institution.

His Social Situation in 1979

Thomas recently married a girl who was a contemporary of his at Birkelid. They live in a newly built area where most of the neighbours are young married couples. Thomas's wife is pregnant, and they both look forward to having a child. They have a good, friendly relationship with the family with whom they are living, who themselves have small children. Thomas's parents and brother live about 20 kilometers away; they are on good enough terms, but meet rather seldom.

Schooling in Retrospect

Thomas evaluates his time at the compulsory primary and secondary school as boring and not worth talking about. He knows that he has grave reading problems, and does nothing to hide them. In daily life, however, he gets by because his wife reads a bit better than he does, and the family they live with and colleagues at work help when official documents have to be filled in.

The education at Birkelid lasted only one year. Thomas looks at his time there as a transition to "real life", and feels proud of what he achieved. He had training tasks that he could understand and found overcoming them was meaningful and important for his adult life. First, he managed his training job, he managed to live alone and he got a paid job. After that, he got his driver's license, married and is now waiting to take on the joys and responsibilities of a father. He has really grown into adulthood.

Thomas visited Birkelid often for as long as the girl he married remained there, and never tries to hide that he himself had been a pupil once. He still has friends among the staff, but he would not want the school to run his affairs again.

Looking Ahead

Thomas wants to stay in his job. His hope for the future is to make a good home for his family. If he comes to need some kind of support or advice, he will talk the problems over with his workmates.

Evaluation

Difficulty in reading was Thomas's main handicap when he arrived at Birkelid, and this problem still exists. Nevertheless, the school looks upon him as one of their successes. One key to his development is motivation. He puts much effort into the tasks he considers worthwhile and thereby meets goodwill. He has solid support from his colleagues and new friends. Birkelid school has said "What we did for Thomas was to find a job for him, and in his case, this was enough. He needed a chance to show his abilities, which could

only develop in a real working situation. More traditional schooling would have been of no use to him."

CASE 2: CECILIE -- SEMI-SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT

Personal Background

Cecilie was born in 1956, the youngest of five children. Her father is a carpenter. The family home is a detached house on the outskirst of an average sized town. The family belongs to a puritan, religious minority group.

Cecilie attended a normal school, but could not keep up with lessons and was put in a class for backward children. This gave rise, in her teens, to emotional problems -- especially a sense of inferiority because she had been segregated and a conviction that her face and body were ugly.

She was sent to Birkelid for a change of scene and joined the work training programme which included spells in a factory and an old people's home. She was well reported on, but talked little and made no friends.

She left Birkelid at 18 after a year's training and was found a job in her home town in the regional hospital. She lives with her parents.

Working Situation after Four Years

Cecilie's hospital job, found by the local employment exchange, was specially arranged for her. Seventy per cent of her wage comes from state rehabilitation funds and, as she is paid for only half a day's work (four hours), she also receives a 50 per cent invalid pension.

When interviewed (at home), she enjoyed talking about her job which was in the hospital laundry. She worked with a number of older women at the washing machines, sorting the clothes, putting them into the machines, then taking them out again -- always being told by her workmates exactly what to do. It was quite heavy work and, at times, in very bad surroundings; but she still liked her job, feeling she was doing something meaningful and was of help in the laundry.

Social Situation

Cecilie has a good, friendly relationship with the older women working at the hospital laundry. She always takes part in the small social occasions at her working place, like Christmas parties, celebration of birthdays and of the start of the summer holidays. If she has a problem or wants to seek advice as to her future plans, she will talk it over with her older colleagues at the laundry.

Cecilie lives with her parents, and has no economic problems, but she feels socially isolated. She has no friends of her own age, and in her spare time is very much alone. Her older brother and sisters are all married and

live with their families in other parts of the country. "I have enough money," Cecilie says, "but I do not know what to do with it. I would like to go out, go downtown, but my mother will not let me go alone and I have no friends to go with. I like to go fishing with my parents or alone. In the holidays, I go with my parents, but this year they are staying at home, so I have nothing to do. I would like to travel, but I cannot do that alone."

Schooling in Retrospect

Cecilie's opinion of her time at school is all negative. She blames herself for being unable to learn or to make friends. She was, and still is, a very lonely girl. She does not see any connection between her training at Birkelid and the job she has today. "I think Birkelid school made the job at the hospital available for me," she says, "but I was not trained in that kind of work. I worked at Birkelid, too, and the jobs I had were OK. The teachers were all right, but I had no fun there. The other pupils teased me, because of my ugly face. They called me the ugly witch. I am glad I am back home now, and I do not want to visit Birkelid again." When Cecilie evaluates her own time at school, it seems that the social aspects are the most important for her. She has always been an outsider, and she feels that her social isolation is her own failure.

Future Plans

Cecilie hopes for a better social life, but she does not know how to go about it. She is also hoping for more work to do -- full time, not part time as at present. She finds it boring staying at home, and would like to rent a room somewhere, but she thinks that her parents will never allow her to do that. So she has a rather pessimistic view about her future -- some dreams certainly, but she does not really believe in them.

Evaluation

The staff at Birkelid school feel that more should have been done for Cecilie during her school time. Her social situation should have been analysed and worked upon -- a very difficult task. The priority of the training programme is to find a stable working situation for the pupils, and in this respect the school succeeded. Cecilie's personal and social problems could be interpreted as teenage ones that might be expected to disappear as she grew older. But already she is an adult, and she has a job that means a lot to her, but she is not getting much enjoyment out of life. Her case shows that occupational integration alone will not solve all the problems that mentally handicapped youngsters meet in a normal society.

CASE 3: ANNE -- UNPAID EMPLOYMENT

Personal Background

Anne was born in 1953, the youngest of three sisters. Her parents are

teachers in the normal school system and have their own home in an average sized town. Anne has cerebral palsy and walks fairly well, but her movements are slow and stiff. She has some speech difficulty.

Anne attended a day school for the handicapped, but proved a very slow learner and had great difficulty in remembering; with extra coaching, she learned to read, but with little understanding.

Anne was sent to Birkelid school to test her ability to work. She had training jobs in a kindergarten and in an old people's home where she could only work very slowly on her own for ten to fifteen minutes without being told again what to do. She was physically unable to do heavy work, or simple assembly jobs in the factory through lack of manual co-ordination. She liked the school and made friends there, but her childish behaviour created problems for the boarding-school staff. Her parents lived close enough for her to visit home often.

After two years, Anne left Birkelid at the age of 20, still child-like, and returned to her family. No job was found for her, it being impossible to find anything that she could manage.

Working Situation

Anne was interviewed when she returned to the school on a visit. She was very neatly dressed, with her hair and make up well done. "I have a job in a family that are friends of my mother's," she said, "I go there every day because my parents are both working in the town. The mother of the family works part-time, so I am sometimes alone in the house. I do some cleaning, make the beds, and wash plates and cups in the kitchen. I go shopping to collect things that are ordered, and help the mother with the cooking, which I like very much. I go home when my parents return from work."

Anne's parents created this occupation for her. She gets some pocket money for the work she is doing, but her main source of income is an invalid pension. Nevertheless, she feels that she has a job and that her work is important. If she is unable to go to "her job" on any day she has to let them know, so that other arrangements can be made. In this way, her life has a stable routine, and she has a safe place to go when her parents are away from home.

Social Situation

Anne does not know how much money she earns or what comes in as invalid pension. Her mother accompanies her to buy clothes, and to the hairdresser's, and buys everything else she needs. She gets some money every week to buy chocolates and magazines, but has no special hobbies or interests. Once a month she goes with her mother to a women's church club. For her holidays, she sometimes visits her sisters (once she went to London with a sister and brother-in-law) but most often she accompanies her parents.

She has few friends of her own age, and very seldom goes anywhere alone, apart from visiting Birkelid school. She enjoys being with the pupils there, although they all are much younger than she is.

Schooling in Retrospect

Anne enjoyed her school days and being with other children. Even at the age of 26, she still spoke of it as a place to have fun. She remembered friends she had, boys who were handsome, teachers who were charming. For her, work training was simply "the job I had to go to"; school functioned as a nice place to stay for a couple of years, and remains a source of social recreation and company.

Future Plans

Anne had nothing to say about her own future. "I will do what my mother tells me to do," she said, and no doubt continues to seek her advice on any problems. At present, she seems content with her way of life, and the prospect of its continuation.

Evaluation

Anne is living in a prolonged childhood; any problems at Birkelid school were caused by her immaturity. The job that her parents created for her seems most suitable -- she is useful to her host family, and her parents can leave her with them, knowing that she is occupied and looked after.

Anne is a girl who will always need support and some protection, but possibly she is overprotected. Her social life could be more normal, and she ought to have more freedom in the use of her own money. Her very surroundings designate her "a handicapped child", since both she and her parents accept that she will always be dependent on her family and remain socially impaired.

CASE 4: MARTHA -- PROLONGED EDUCATION

Personal Background

Martha was born 1957 in the United States and stayed there until she was five when the family returned to Norway after an accident to her father who is now rehabilitated and in a well-paid job.

She developed very slowly in walking and talking, was diagnosed as "retarded", and did not start school until she was eight. She had most of her lessons in a small group of retarded children who were kept isolated from the rest of the school.

By her fifth year at school, Martha was still making no progress and she was moved to Birkelid as a weekly boarder at the insistance of her father. She joined the further education programme and did her work training in the school kitchen and in an old people's home. She was very slow and took a long time to learn simple tasks. When she had completed the course her teachers considered that she could benefit from more schooling and she was found a place at a school in her home town that provided training in domestic work.

Working Situation at 22 Years of Age

By 1979, Martha was still a pupil at this last school, and starting in the same class for the third time. In the spring, she had two months of training in a sheltered workshop, but without any pay. "It was so nice to have a job," she said. "I learnt to use the copying machine, and I could work all day making copies and sorting papers. It would be very interesting to work in an office. Before, I only wanted to work with children." But Martha was told that she worked too slowly to stay in the sheltered workshop, and it looked as if she would have to return to school. "But now I am tired of school," she said. "I would rather work, maybe I could get some new friends too."

Martha very much wanted the interviewer to meet her father, who said: "We have been advised to apply for an invalid pension for Martha, but we will certainly not do that. If she gets the pension, the employment exchange will forget her, and she will never get a job. She has had enough schooling now; what she needs is a job. I want to take her out of school, and we will contact the employment exchange and the rehabilitation consultant every week." For Martha and her family, it was not important that the job should be well paid, but that she should have something meaningful to do and friends outside her home.

Social Situation

Martha, herself, described her family as very loving. She admired her father, and often stayed at her sister's with her husband and children. She had a good relationship with her neighbours as well, enjoyed baby-sitting and running small errands for them. She had some girlfriends from the school, and was allowed to go to town alone to meet them in the afternoons, but not in the evenings. Martha had no boyfriends, and was longing for more contact with boys and girls of her own age. "Sometimes I long for something exciting to happen," she said laughingly.

Schooling in Retrospect

The time at Birkelid school had been good. It was nice to stay at a boarding school, exciting to get new room-mates, and to join in social events. The work training, however, was a bit dull, Martha thought, and certainly disappointing. She did not like working alone, and what she had to do was tiring: washing and cleaning all the time. "I have been washing floors for years," she said "and my mother has taught me now to bake cakes and cook potatoes. There is nothing new to learn at that school."

Future Plans

Martha hoped that she would get a job, and that one day she would be able to move to an apartment of her own. She wanted to stay in the same town as her family, but was longing for a home of her own. The main thing, however, was to get a job, and she was prepared to visit her employment exchange regularly and take whatever they offered. She would always go to her father for advice.

Evaluation

Martha was still striving to be integrated into occupational life. She was fairly well socially integrated into her neighbourhood, partly because she was defined as a member of a well-respected family. However, she longed to be more independent, with a social life and companions of her own.

Her case shows that prolonged education may prove just a delaying stage, or an excuse for not putting enough effort into the search for a job. One striking and somewhat unexpected problem in this case lay in the personnel policy of the sheltered workshops. For economic and productivity reasons, they are very hesitant to engage workers who will always be slow.

CASE 5: HARALD -- INVALID PENSIONER

Personal Background

Harald was born in 1957, the eldest son of a farmer in a remote mountainous area. In early childhood he was obese, slept a lot, and showed a stubborn personality. He caused no problems. He spent his first six years at the local school where he was a slowish learner, was tired at the end of the day and rarely played with other children. At 13, he went to a central school in the nearest town and nad adjustment problems. He began to wander away and was difficult to get ready for school each morning.

The school psychologist found him mildly retarded but his performance was far below his intellectual level. At 15, he transferred to Birkelid as a boarder to get more individual attention and stayed three years.

Harald put little effort into schoolwork and made little progress. He read newspapers, unusual at Birkelid, and liked participation in discussions where he put forward surprisingly strong arguments. He was still very overweight and tired easily. Medical examination showed no organic abnormalities. He followed a prescribed diet during the day, but stole more food to eat at night.

For his training period, he worked first on a farm where he liked handling heavy machines and bossing his colleagues about. When he transferred to the mechanical workshop, he started wandering away again, and had to be sought and brought back in the evening. He was diagnosed once in a mental hospital but didn't respond to medication and psychotherapy was considered pointless.

At 18, he left school, moved into a rented room and worked at a carpenter's. He did his share but was very hostile to colleagues. A rehabilitation programme was started after three months because he could not look after his room or clothes and his personal hygiene was bad. Harald then returned to the family farm in the mountains.

Working Situation Today

Harald got his invalid pension as soon as he was back on the farm, where he remained. He was interviewed in the summer, when all the family except him were working in the fields. "I have to stay here, because we cannot all leave the house," he said. He was very proud of the farm, showed off all the buildings, and said how old they were. "The farm will someday be mine," he said, "because I am the oldest son." But it was Harald's parents and brothers who did the farming. Harald had two pastimes: fishing in the summer, and reading newspapers and magazines in the winter. He seemed to like his way of life. The invalid pension he spent as pocket money.

Social Situation

The family live a lonely life on the remote farm. But Harald's younger brother had bought a car, and was often out on Saturday evenings at cinemas or dances. Harald could go with him if he wanted to, but usually stayed at home. He had no friends of his own age, but did not feel this as a problem. He liked to be alone and was happy to be back on "his" farm.

Schooling in Retrospect

Harald did not like being away from home. He found the other children silly, and did not want to play with them. He tolerated the medical examinations, saying "it was interesting" to stay in hospitals. Work training, though, was meaningless. "I knew I was going back to the farm one day; why should I work without getting paid?" The period at the carpenter's he described as: "The time I had to wait to get my invalid pension." Harald had no bitter feelings towards Birkelid school, but he disliked the psychologist who had sent him there.

Future plans

Harald hoped to take over the farm some day. This was his only plan for the future, and he did not want anyone to advise or help him. Whether or not it was legally possible is not recorded.

Evaluation

Harald had some severe adjustment problems, but these were only serious when he was outside his normal environment. At the farm he was accepted, cared for, and not expected to do hard work. From his viewpoint, life was unproblematic; he may, however, represent a problem for his family. His outlook on the future seems unrealistic and he may become a burden for his younger brothers or sisters. Nevertheless, the farm was the only place where Harald could live what was, to him, a normal life. Elsewhere, he would probably have to be confined to an institution.

Birkelid school evaluated Harald as an educational failure. They did not succeed in giving him the right training, and it was impossible to motivate him to train for an independent life. The period at Birkelid, then,

was little more than a diagnostic one. It was important to check that he suffered from no known organic disease and that, medically, nothing could be done for him. Educationally, he was just not willing to co-operate.

So, life on the farm and an invalid pension were probably the best solution -- at any rate, it was what Harald wanted.

IV. EVALUATION OF THE NORWEGIAN CASES

The cases we have presented tell five different stories. Bearing in mind that a large number of the Birkelid pupils followed up have found jobs, a high proportion (especially among the boys) showed a development similar to Thomas's. He used the training opportunity effectively, and work in a real workshop developed unsuspected abilities in him. We found many more examples where pupils' training experiences are directly used in their work today.

It is also worth noting that social life takes on a great importance when the pupils themselves evaluate their time at school: boarding-school life, school companions and social events are well remembered -- and mostly positively. Nevertheless, some former pupils now regard it as bad for prestige to talk about their life at a school for mentally retarded children. One of the girls tries deliberately to give the impression that she belonged to the staff at Birkelid. On the other hand, most of the pupils had experienced some kind of failure or isolation in the normal school, and they often mention this -- being relieved that this "childhood stress" is over and done with.

Work means a lot to most of them -- much more than just an income. It is a meaningful and accepted way of living and also provides social company. Martha's parents, like those of three other pupils, deliberately refused to apply for invalid pension so as to force the local labour authorities to put maximum effort into the search for jobs. Most parents certainly see work as a goal worth striving for.

It should be recognised, however, that prolonged schooling can sometimes blur the real problems, as in Martha's case. This surprised the school staff, since a recommendation for more schooling often expresses the hope that the pupil will be able to learn more. In real life, however, in competition with normal youngsters, prolonged training seldom brings them on to equal terms. It might be useful in cases of specific training, but prolonged general training does not seem to make it any easier to get a job.

Some of our cases show that an invalid pension may be a good solution, enabling the pupil to stay at home, live in the family, and be integrated in the local community as a family member. This was especially true for those who were both mentally retarded and suffering from psychiatric disorders, and for whom the alternative would be life in a segregated institution.

IV

FOUR DISABLED YOUNG PEOPLE FROM ST. LOYE'S COLLEGE -- EXETER, ENGLAND

Abridged from Case Studies by Seamus Hegarty and Sandra Jowett

I. ST. LOYE'S COLLEGE: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SCHOOL AND WORK

The four young people whose experiences are recounted here all attended the same training college for disabled people, following a further education course there for at least a year. This was designed to improve their general educational level and lead on to a vocational training course. In the event, three of the four went on to training courses although only one completed a course successfully.

These four young people are part of a larger group of leavers from the college's further education unit who were the subject of a research investigation carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research during 1980-81. Inquiries were made by interview and questionnaire of all those who entered the unit over the five-year period 1974-78. One of us has already given full details of the methodology of the study and its findings [Jowett (1982) Young Disabled People -- Their Further Education Training and Employment]; just after this, these four young people were interviewed again to provide broader information on their educational backgrounds and to up-date their employment and general life experiences as a contribution to the CERI programme on the Handicapped Adolescent.

St. Loye's College is a residential training college designed to equip the disabled for open employment. There are training places for 150 people who "may be handicapped by almost any disability except purely psychiatric illness or total blindness". The college sees itself as aiming "to qualify the individual to take his or her place alongside the able-bodied in competitive industrial or commercial employment at the normal rate of pay for the job". To this end, close on 20 training courses relevant to a wide range of job opportunities are on offer. These vary in duration from twelve weeks to a full year.

The training courses are grouped into two broad areas: commercial skills (seven courses) and technical skills (eight courses). In addition, there are three other courses covering industrial cookery, horticulture and storekeeping.

The courses taken by the young people with whom we are here concerned were: Telephone Switchboard Operating with typing spanning 16 weeks; Electronic Wiring spanning 20 weeks; and Storekeeping spanning 14 weeks.

The Telephone Switchboard course provides training in the operation of all current types of telephone switchboard and includes an element of reception duties.

Electronic Wiring is a course in industrial electronic wiring technique and practice designed to meet the employment requirements of most manufacturers in the electronics industry. The normal level of achievement is that appropriate to a production line wireman.

The Storekeeping course provides practical and theoretical instruction in the maintenance of stores records, use of standard stores documents and day-to-day stores operation. Security and safety measures are dealt with and proper care of goods, maintenance of stock levels and reordering techniques are covered.

While the original function of the college was to cater specifically for adults, particularly those who became disabled in adult life, it was recognised that it could assist younger people as well. The latter, generally disabled from birth or early childhood, had similar needs in respect of vocational training, more specifically -- improved general education; assistance in making the transition from school to work; and a pre-vocational course different in kind from that provided for adult trainees.

The college has sought to meet these needs by developing a further education unit. This caters for up to 60 school leavers (16 to 18) and is designed to bridge the gap between school and vocational training. The unit offers a three-term (one year) foundation course in maths, English, general studies, technical and commercial skills. There is a training orientation throughout, and an effort is made to establish each young person's "bias", i.e. toward commercial or training skills. At the end of the year, the majority of students in the unit spend a fourth term on a specific pre-training course before starting on their training courses proper. About three-quarters of the students actually make this move. The remainder, who are considered unlikely to benefit from a training course, follow a one-term work preparation course.

II. THE CASE STUDIES

CASE 1: LESLEY -- A RECEPTIONIST/TYPIST

Personal Background

Lesley was born in 1959, with spina bifida, and spent her first year in hospital, early development being delayed. Later, after an operation, she returned to family and, due to parental stimulation, made developmental

gains. She was never particularly motivated to walk and still uses a wheelchair virtually always. Independent toiletting was not achieved until well into primary school.

From three to ten, she attended day school for about 20 physically handicapped children. Teaching was very basic and much time was spent on physiotherapy. Poor academic prospects there ruled out integrated placement in a mainstream school and she went on to a boarding school for girls recommended by a spina bifida voluntary society from the age of ten to nineteen. She settled down quickly and enjoyed the life, but performance in public examinations at the end of schooling was poor.

On leaving school, Lesley went to St. Loye's with training for telephone switchboard work in mind. Recurrent pressure sores interrupted her attendance in the Further Education Unit where she had to spend four and a half terms before going on to the Telephone Switchboard Operating with typing courses which she completed successfully.

Experience of Work

Lesley got a job within two weeks of leaving St. Loye's and still has it four years later. She acquired it through the efforts of a Disablement Resettlement Officer at the Job Centre in her local area. A woman from the Job Centre accompanied her to this, her first, job interview, which she appreciated very much. In the event, the interview was easy, straightforward and successful.

Lesley has mixed feelings about the operations of the support services, as she experienced them in this and other instances. She is appreciative of the efforts made on her behalf and acknowledges that she has benefited from being encouraged into courses of action, e.g. going to St. Loye's, that she would not have done on her own. On the other hand, some professionals strike her as being insensitive to the reality of disability. One such person was "rather keen to tell you about your ability"; he made light of the limitations set by handicapping conditions and encouraged youngsters to set their sights high. It would be difficult to find fault with this as either a personal or a professional orientation. However, as Lesley insists, "disabled people have their own opinions" and these must be taken seriously and argued against if necessary and not ignored or dismissed as irrelevant.

Lesley's job as a receptionist/typist is in a Government office in her home town. It entails operating the switchboard, typing, sending out circulars, some filing and other clerical duties as required. She has a 15-to 20-minute journey to work, driven by her mother. She travels home by taxi, paid for out of a mobility allowance which she considers generous.

She recalls settling down at work quite quickly. She had felt shy at first, but "everybody made me feel welcome". The offices are all on the ground floor and provide easy access and internal mobility for wheelchairs. Some minor alterations to toilet arrangements had been necessary and were effected straight away without fuss. Otherwise, people were generally helpful, if anything too much so, e.g. in explaining repeatedly things which Lesley claimed to know perfectly well how to do.

Lesley is quite happy about her work situation. The work to be done is well within her capacity and she has the same workload as colleagues. As an employee she is no different from anybody else and is not treated as such. She expects to stay working where she is for the foreseeable future and is quite content at the prospect. She would not relish moving to a different office, and, while she is prepared to do so if she has to, would prefer to stay in her present comfortable routine rather than accept promotion that meant upheaval and accommodating to a new environment.

It may be noted that while Lesley is content with her work and would be loath to leave her switchboard, this is not the work she would do given free choice. If it were possible, she would like to work with young children. However, she does not hanker after things she assumes are not possible for her.

Social and Personal Life

Lesley, now 23 and easy-going, lives with her parents and three sisters. One gets the impression of a lively happy family. They are relatively well-to-do and Lesley has a purpose-built apartment with modified kitchen at one end of the house.

Her main spare time activity is watching television. Although she is an avid viewer, she does not let it get in the way of socialising. "If there is someone around to talk to, I'll talk to them; if there isn't, I'll watch telly." If there is an opportunity of going out, she will jump at it. She professes to be scornful of people who get so hooked on television that their social lives are shaped by it.

A more active hobby is provided by her interest in gardening. She belongs to a small gardening club comprising seven to eight disabled and able-bodied people. In addition to houseplants which she sees to, she has recently acquired a raised flower bed in the family garden and plans ambitious things there. She attended the local PHAB club on a few occasions but not regularly -- this arranges joint activities for the physically handicapped and able-bodied people. She likes the idea of a deliberate social mix of this kind but found the gatherings boring (too few people and a bit juvenile). Apart from these occasions, Lesley tends to go out only with members of her family -- shopping, to the theatre or, quite often, visiting relations.

The mechanics of going out do not present a problem and, as Lesley admits, give her no excuse for not going out more often. As well as family transport, which is very readily available, the town's social services operate a mini-bus with chair-lift service for disabled people at a cost of little more than the equivalent public transport fare.

Her circle of friends is relatively limited. She keeps in touch with distant friends from St. Loye's and visits them quite often. She is on friendly terms with her workmates and attends any social events organised at work, but she does not see any of them outside work on a social basis.

In short, her social life revolves around her family and she does not often get to meet new people. She puts this down to the fact that she does not go out a great deal. She admits too that when she does go out, she tends to wait for other people to make the first move. This natural shyness is

compounded with a refusal to be patronised which can constitute a barrier for other people. She perceives those who do seek her out as either do-gooders or social isolates themselves. Also, the existence of strong family ties, while supportive, is a clear disincentive: there is no pressure to build up an active social life outside the home.

Such independence is a positive and healthy quality that can be a protection against hurt and disappointment. It can be a negative force however if pushed too far and everybody's motives become suspect. Lesley professes to a mild cynicism and seems to use it to shield off the disappointments that are the common lot of disabled people in their personal relationships. The danger is that this shield may become a barrier that cuts her off from people as well as from disappointments.

As things are, she has a remarkable acceptance of her disability and does not waste energy in wishing it away. She can discuss it without difficulty or embarrassment. She used to get embarrassed when people stared or were unduly curious in their questions; now she just gets mildly annoyed.

Schooling in Retrospect

Lesley enjoyed living in a residential community with other girls. Looking back she sees it as a positive experience that had done her good. There were drawbacks, particularly in the way of being cossetted within an institutional regime where "too much was done for you" and it was easy to become lazy and lacking in independence. When meals are provided and all the needs of daily living seen to, there is limited scope for personal decision-making.

About her time in the Further Education Unit at St. Loye's, Lesley has mixed feelings. She took a while to settle down, and it was not until her final two terms that staff felt she was working to potential. Looking back, she says that she liked the work for the most part and affirms that it was worthwhile for her. Art and general studies she enjoyed in particular. Some of the work seemed needlessly repetitive and some of it she felt she could have done without, though acknowledging -- without too much conviction! -- that "obviously any further education has to be useful". Lesley had a very clear and definite idea of the training course she wanted to do and saw little point in spending time on activities geared to other courses. She valued her time on the training course particularly because, in contrast with the Further Education Unit, "all the work seemed relevant to your future employment".

The restrictions associated with the residential aspect of the college irked Lesley a great deal. Discipline was tight and she resented the way in which she and the other young people, who would have been aged 16 and over, were treated like children -- "never felt she had been treated so young. There are lots of petty regulations which were enforced in a way that made you feel a bit like delinquents." Her attitudes have mellowed a little with time: "you see more reasons for rules the older you get -- it worries me less the further away it is." She is quite clear in her mind however that the regime was inappropriate and more restrictive than it need have been.

Lesley enjoyed the social side of life at the college and made a number of friends there. Some of these have lasted even though contact is limited

because St. Loye's has a national catchment area. She keeps in touch by letter and often travels by train to visit and stay with distant friends. Such initiative notwithstanding, the fact remains that the day-to-day companionship of friends with whom close bonds may have been formed is not possible.

The Future

Lesley's life runs on an even keel and she is not particularly concerned about the future. Indeed, she gives the impression of thinking little about it. She is content with her work situation and expects to continue there for the foreseeable future.

She has no particular plans to leave home. She could move away and set up in a flat but would only want to do so if she were sharing with others or, ideally, getting married. The latter is not in prospect at the moment; she thinks vaguely from time to time that it would be nice to be married and have children but this is not something that she actively seeks. She is conscious that her domestic skills would have to develop considerably if she were to set up home on her own (her main skill at the moment is probably in persuading her sisters to do chores for her!). She makes little use of the facilities in her own adapted kitchen. She maintains, however, that things would be different, and she would be far more motivated for housekeeping if she moved away from home and was responsible for a place herself.

CASE 2: MARTIN -- A TOLL-BRIDGE KEEPER

Personal Background

Born in 1959, Martin has epilepsy. His parents are well-qualified, professional people who are well-off. His primary education was at a school for maladjusted boys and his secondary education at a local comprehensive school -- despite parents' misgivings, though they knew of no alternative. The transition was difficult and Martin proved very much a social isolate who had frequent difficulties with others, being unable to relate to people around him. He tried to buy friendship with gifts and cash. His leaving report said "out of place" and "the subject of ridicule". Martin's lack of social success was paralleled academically; he left at 16 without having passed any examination.

His parents, much concerned about his next move, apparently did not obtain any authoritative guidance. They heard of St. Loye's by sheer chance and after some trouble due to general unawareness got the local authority to support their application for Martin to go there. His interview was successful and he enrolled only a few months after leaving school. Martin's later assertion that he was helped vocationally at St. Loye's was not reflected in his achievements there. He did not gain any qualifications and had difficulty in coping with the storekeeping course -- one of the less demanding vocational courses offered. Vocational training reports describe his "lack of practical ability" and his inability to "understand instructions,

both verbal and written". He was regarded as being immature and lacking in initiative. On the positive side, his "honesty, willingness to follow orders and open acceptance of criticism and correction of faults" were noted.

He proved unable to capitalise on the opportunities for social development and independence afforded by the residential setting, and so continued to be very much a loner.

By now, at 23, Martin has developed a certain "oddness" of self-presentation that is apparent on a first meeting. His shoulders are rounded from his permanently hunched posture and he speaks with a surprisingly high-pitched, rather squeaky voice. His very limited opportunity for social contacts is reflected in the difficulty he displays in sustaining and responding to conversation.

Experience of Work

Martin's route to work reflects the supportive relationship and practical help offered by his parents. He obtained his first job (only six weeks after leaving St. Loye's) through his father approaching a local garage-owner who had a large storeroom for spares and parts. Martin was employed for nearly a year as a storekeeper and is very negative about many aspects of the working environment. He felt that, although the stores were "a mess" and "utter chaos", he was not allowed to show any initiative and found it difficult to work as a junior employee. He resented being treated as a messenger and did not get on with the other employees. Apparently, one or two of his fellow workers were unpleasant and "messed me about all the time".

Martin had seen the local careers officer and had applied (unsuccessfully) for a place on the Youth Opportunities Programme. He viewed her as reasonably friendly, but felt he might have usefully spent more time with her. He did not approach her when he was dissatisfied with his first job, but waited until his mother saw the advertisement for his present post before giving in his notice.

He is currently employed as a toll-bridge keeper in the village, where his only responsibility is to collect a small charge from motorists as they pass. The work does not pose any threats to Martin's limited social competence. He works long hours alone and apart from brief exchanges with familiar passers-by admits to feeling socially isolated. He is aware that the work is not the good job he had to some extent envisaged after St. Loye's but has no immediate or concrete plans to change. Life is ordered. His father drops him at the bridge for 8.30 a.m. and picks him up at 6.00 p.m. in the evening. While the work is tedious it is not difficult and Martin is concerned that, when the proposed sale of the bridge is completed, he will be redundant. Certainly the work is potentially dangerous -- he was knocked down in his early months at work and was awarded financial compensation. In the three and a half years he has been there, he feels he has been in constant danger. He finds the work unpleasant as he is out in all weathers and has "plenty" of problems with people asking for change and throwing their toll fee on the road.

Martin's epilepsy has not been a problem for him in that he has never had a seizure at work and, in fact, cannot recall ever having had one in

public (his last seizure was two years ago). They seem to occur when he first wakes and have apparently been well controlled by medication. He earns nearly £50 a week and is adamant that this is not enough -- when he boasts of the amount of beer he consumes, he makes no bones about the high cost of this pleasure. His mother is puzzled by his attitude to money as he has no financial responsibilities. He seems to view it as something to have rather than to enjoy.

Social Circumstances

Martin's parents are well-to-do professional people with two daughters at university. They have a wide circle of friends and acquaintances and enjoy a range of leisure time activities. It is on to this framework that Martin's leisure time has to some extent been grafted. He went to America alone to stay with his godfather; he has stayed with relations in the South of England to attend sporting events and he regularly watches skittles tournaments in a local pub.

When discussing his life, he orientates it most of the time to the toll bridge: the only people he knows are those he sees crossing regularly; he feels that he would like to get married one day and that there are "one or two nice people" he has in mind, but again these are young women he sees passing. His mother is clearly moved when she tells of how Martin comes home when he has had a few drinks and rambles about his need for a girlfriend and his desire to marry. He goes out for a drink practically every evening and seems to value the sense of "belonging" and social acceptance that this provides. His older sister who visits the pub with friends during the vacations says that he stands at the bar alone and other villagers nod in his direction or shout greetings across to him as they order their drinks. He says he feels restricted by the limitations that his medication for epilepsy imposes on his consumption of beer as he "can't keep off the stuff".

When there was a fancy dress competition, Martin entered into the spirit of the event and left home in full regalia, even though he was an outsider during the festivities. But by and large, he is a somewhat bland, withdrawn person who takes little interest in anything outside his basic daily routine.

Schooling in Retrospect

Martin remembers that his transition to secondary school was difficult. There were so many aspects of school life that were unfamiliar and he admits to having problems because he was seen as different. He knew some of his contemporaries by sight, but was excluded from the friendship groups that had been established at primary school. A wider curriculum was available and he felt ill-prepared for such diversity. On the positive side, he recalls that his teachers seemed to have more time for him and were more helpful than at his other school. He recalls that he had "one or two" friends at school though he is not in touch with anyone now and only sees other former pupils if they pass in the village. His statement that "things worked out all right" with his peers contrasts sharply with his headmaster's report of "subject of ridicule".

Martin is convinced that his four terms of further education and three months of vocational training in storekeeping at St. Loye's were worthwhile. His reflections on his time there are focused on the work and the prospects for vocational placement. He thought of St. Loye's as a place where he could learn skills and continue his education and feels that had he passed his storekeeping course (he was not awarded a diploma on its completion), he would have increased his potential for successful employment. He enjoyed the English lessons, found much of the curriculum interesting and valued the opportunity for individual help. He certainly feels more confident about work because of having been to St. Loye's.

He is unusual in that he made no reference to the social activities or the opportunities for making friends and developing independence when he reflected on his time at St. Loye's. Most of the young people in our survey made at least some comment on their personal development during their period of further education and for many, this was of crucial importance.

The Future

Martin's life is materially extremely comfortable and his long-term financial security is assured. He has no plans to leave home since he would find independent living a struggle on his income. Clearly, there are gains from living at home -- both emotional and practical -- and he is reasonably happy with the situation although he resents being asked to help with chores at the weekends.

Martin's only comments about employment in the future are vague. He will "just stick it out for a few more years" and he does "look around" for other jobs. The threat of closure for the bridge is a real one and Martin is unwilling to join the ranks of the unemployed. Work is clearly valued by him, whatever his criticisms of the conditions. Despite being depressed by the tedium, Martin does not want redundancy. His present "cushioning" at work, at home and socially prevents him from developing in ways that could be beneficial and, indeed, will confront him in the future. The lifestyles that people choose or develop vary considerably but Martin's seems based on a lack of options and competences rather than choice. His assurance that he "doesn't worry about the future, not yet anyway" may change significantly as his options are overtaken by events.

CASE 3: JESSICA AND GRAHAM -- YOUNG MARRIEDS

Jessica and Graham met at St. Loye's and subsequently married. Here we consider each separately before moving on to discuss their present and future life together.

JESSICA

Jessica is a young mother approaching 22, caring for her fifteen-month-old child in the comfortable home she and her husband, Graham, have made. She has cerebral palsy affecting her legs to such an extent that her mobility is severely limited and her left arm is considerably weakened. There is a feeling of competence and warmth about her as she deals with her child's needs and speaks of her own life so far.

Personal Background

Born in 1961, Jessica attended the local primary school but was not accepted at local secondary (just around the corner) because the headmaster would not run the risk of admitting her. Instead, she attended a school a ten-mile round trip away by taxi and even here was excluded from lessons in certain buildings and set to work alone.

She had prolonged absences from school, between seven and eleven; she took six months off each year -- three in hospital and three convalescing. Operations were performed to correct knees and ankles and strengthen hips.

Schooling in Retrospect

Jessica's recollections of school are on the whole distasteful: verbal cruelty and teasing by children; insensitivity of staff not wanting to be responsible for her and implying they were doing her a favour by allowing her attendance at school. Nevertheless, she is a firm believer that the integration of handicapped children into ordinary schools is an essential policy. But some explanation and introduction should be given to all classes when a handicapped child joins the school and should not wait until after unpleasantness had developed.

On leaving school, Jessica attended a week's assessment course with the Spastics Society and applied to St. Loye's on their recommendation. She recalls no useful advice about the options available to her after school and found little encouragement in the career officer's advice to find herself a "sitting-down job". More concrete advice would have been appreciated; nevertheless, she had been unable to develop her educational potential at school and so was eager for the opportunity of further education and a place on a vocational training course.

Jessica recalls her time at college with great pleasure and although she comments that the best thing about being there was that it gave her a chance to meet her future husband, she clearly feels that there were many other gains. Her maths improved so that she felt she was up to the General Certificate of Education O-level standard, although her English "went worse". She enjoyed typing as her speed improved.

Going home during the vacations had made her realise "just how much I liked the place" and, on leaving, she regretted not being able to go back

"even if just for a term". Clearly, the social aspect of her time away in a residential setting was of great significance and some long-term friendships were forged, later to be fostered.

After her five terms in the Further Education Unit, Jessica was bitterly disappointed on failing her assessment for a place on a vocational training course. The guidance she had received about post-school opportunities had not prepared her for this rejection and she feld "misled". She blamed her lack of literacy skills and was much distressed "not to have achieved anything". More flexibility in course structure and more remedial work geared to individual needs might have eased Jessica's evident sense of personal failure. (Since she left St. Loye's, the college has set up a work preparation course for those clients who, like her, are judged unlikely to benefit from following a training course.)

Experience of Work

After a six-month search, Jessica found a job through the good offices of a friend as a cashier at the local branch of a supermarket chain. She enjoyed her work although the hours were long and the wages seemed low. The other girls and supervisory staff were friendly, but she resented some of the restrictions imposed by her disability -- having to use the lift for every journey and not being allowed to work on the shopfloor. There were a few occasions in the winter when she was unable to get to work because the buses were not running (she could not walk that far), but her colleagues accepted this without any difficulty.

After her marriage, Jessica moved to another town and arrangements were made to transfer her to the supermarket branch there. However, the move proved less than satisfactory. To her disappointment, the manager "thought the job was too much for me, so he asked me to leave even though I had worked at the other shop for 14 months and had no trouble there with staff or manager". Jessica's three weeks in the new branch were marred by her being ill on the Friday of her second week, after which the manager proposed that she have a medical as the job seemed "damaging to her health".

After leaving this post Jessica spent several months looking for alternative work -- no easy task in an area of high unemployment with a negative experience on her work record. She was not successful and ended the search when she became pregnant.

Social and Personal Life

When Jessica and Graham realised that their relationship was likely to lead to marriage and parenthood they had obtained genetic counselling, being aware that the history of spina bifida in his family could have repercussions for their own children. They were advised that there was a certain risk for them, but they decided to start a family nonetheless. Having a child just after her 20th birthday, many miles from her own family, could be daunting for any young woman but for Jessica, her disability presented two additional problems -- one physical and the other attitudinal. Her cerebral palsy means that she walks with ungainly and awkward movements, sometimes falls and is unable to regain an upright position unaided. Clearly, there was concern as

to whether or not she would be able to carry a child safely during pregnancy so her already limited activities outside the home were kept to a minimum. In fact, she did not fall during her pregnancy, and her child -- Beatrice -- arrived after a normal delivery.

Practical limitations apart, Jessica remembers her pregnancy as a time of receiving "advice" and "caution" from the people she came into contact with. While the former may be familiar to most pregnant women, the latter related specifically to Jessica's potential as a disabled mother. She was told repeatedly that she would not be able to manage. In fact, she appears to have coped in a remarkably mature way with what must have been worrying additions to her own doubts and fears. When Jessica talks about her pregnancy and early days of motherhood, there is a distinct and proud note of "having shown them".

Jessica delights in her growing child. She is indeed a child to be proud of. She is physically attractive and has been sturdily upright and mobile since she was a year old. There is every evidence of a developing intelligence and her mobility and curiosity are a source of both pleasure and concern to her parents. Jessica's impaired mobility makes it extremely difficult to exercise the degree of supervision such a child demands and she readily admits to frequently feeling exhausted. Her main worry is Beatrice's ability to travel relatively long distances unaided, especially when they are outside or if she has managed to slip through an open door. At present, a shrill shriek of her name always stops her, though Jessica obviously worries that one day it will not. They have no fencing around the small communal garden, and cars frequently pass by.

Jessica and Beatrice live a virtually house-bound life. Partly this reflects their limited budget, but it has more to do with Jessica's disability. She is able to make a trip into town by bus (with the pushchair) once a week and the family usually go in together on Saturday. Apart from visiting her in-laws in the middle of the week, these are the only outings. Before Beatrice could walk, they could not leave their home at all unaccompanied as Jessica could not rely on herself to walk any distance carrying the child.

The fear of Jessica falling is ever present. She did so twice when carrying Beatrice and both times was taken to hospital -- neighbours having heard her cries. Both falls left Beatrice unharmed. There is a telephone in the house and the front door is always left on the latch when her husband is at work so that, should she fall, anyone coming to her assistance would have easy access. Money being short, a telephone would be out of the question were it not essential as an assurance of help in an emergency.

Despite fears to the contrary, Jessica has managed competently with the physical tasks involved in caring for a young child. She deftly changes nappies using one arm and manoeuvres her into position for feeding using an arm and a thigh. Beatrice appears to have developed a more sensitive response to her mother's verbal and non-verbal cues than most children of her age and her relationship with her mother reflects the high degree of their interdependency. Jessica feels well able to manage her normal household chores although they involve more than ordinary time and effort. She is unable to get on her hands and knees or to stand on chairs so she leaves some cleaning jobs to her husband.

Her dissatisfactions lie not in an inability to cope with her daily routine, but in the lack of freedom her limited mobility and low income impose.

GRAHAM

Graham is a young man of 23 who takes his present responsibilities very seriously. He lives with his wife and daughter in his home town and is in regular contact with his family. His aspirations are shaped by traditional values -- a job with a decent living wage and a nice home to bring up his family in -- this in an area with one of the highest unemployment rates in Britain.

Graham's disability -- spina bifida -- is unusual in that it only affects his cervical region, so it is his rather odd appearance that presents the greatest difficulty for him. His chest and shoulders appear disproportionately large in comparison to the rest of his body and he feels that the worst thing about having spina bifida is "other people making fun". As regards physical limitations, his only comment is that it is impossible to wear a tie and extremely difficult to find a shirt that fits. His medical report for entry at St. Loye's stated that his only functional impairment was "limited neck movements". Despite his very real worries and frustrations, Graham is very quick to find humour in most situations. He is a firm believer in the educational integration of handicapped pupils, both in principle and from his own experience. He feels strongly about the physical barriers that may impede the process of integration, however good the intentions, and is critical of school buildings that create problems for people with limited mobility.

Schooling in Retrospect

Graham attended an ordinary primary school and is still pleased that his parents refused to allow him to be sent to a school for educationally subnormal children as it had "such a bad reputation that it's a handicap going there". He then went to a state comprehensive school for his secondary education and felt it was "a waste of time" going there: he was not actually learning but "just copying off the blackboard". Very little of the syllabus seemed relevant to him and his needs and the teachers' attitudes had seemed to be that "the quicker they got rid of you (the lowest stream in the school) the better". His measured IQ was slightly below normal, and his attainment low, particularly in literacy skills. Graham had a near-perfect record of attendance.

On leaving school, he was given a place on a "wasting-time job on a government scheme and then sent on an eleven-week assessment course at a government centre". At this point, he felt himself aware of being classified as "disabled". Recommendations that he apply to a specialist college, St. Loye's, prompted him to re-evaluate himself. He had been keen to train for the painting and decorating trade and had been advised not to take another course he had heard about because there was no basic educational component to

it. He was informed (incorrectly) by his careers officer that he would be able to learn his chosen trade at St. Loye's and is still amazed at being given this misleading information.

He says he was helped tremendously with his literacy skills in the Further Education Unit (when he left school, it wasn't even worth picking up a daily newspaper). Since leaving St. Loye's, he has been a regular attender at Adult Literacy classes and now feels able to understand much of what he reads in the popular press. Graham appreciated the attitude of the teachers in the Further Education Unit, and welcomed the chance he had to learn in smaller classes.

He enjoyed the social opportunities provided by the college and felt it was "good to know that you can go away and live by yourself". Being given responsibility as a deputy in the hall of residence had been valued. In short, his four terms in the Further Education Unit encouraged him to develop independence, to build on his basic education and to establish a sense of his identity as a young man.

He is critical, however, of the vocational training he received. After successfully completing the assessment, he was accepted for a twenty-week electronic wiring course, there being "no reservations concerning his ability to cope with employment". However, he found the written component of the course difficult and was told, towards the end of it, he was six weeks behind schedule with his work. He felt "undermined" by this news so that he "couldn't do anything right", he was then asked to leave early.

Summing up his feelings about the educational provision at the college, he said he had "learnt something, but basically failed". He had completed much of the electronic wiring course but there was "no certificate, nothing to prove it". If his recollection that the days at St. Loye's had been "the best of his life" had been combined with a sense of some personal attainment, he may well have been better prepared for the demands of work and independent adult life.

Experience of Work

After college, Graham spent a discouraging six months looking for employment. His regular visits to his disablement resettlement officer were frustrating and unhelpful. He applied for one job and was turned down because it was felt he could not cope with the lifting involved. Nothing else emerged until he was advised to apply to the local Institute for the Blind Workshop, and this is where he has been employed for the past three and a half years.

His dissatisfaction with the working conditions has increased noticeably over this time, but his dismay at the ethos of an institution run for disabled people has been evident from the start. His contempt for the committee that runs the workshop is, no doubt, shared by the increasing number of people who are disabled and want involvement in decision-making rather than paternalism. His low wages (£55 a week, April 1982) reflect, he feels, an inability to realise that disabled people have "still got lives to lead, commitments, families and responsibilities" and a sense that they are lucky to be given jobs at all. An appropriate start could, he feels, be made by

changing the name of the place (at the moment, it "dogs you"). His struggle for respect as a working adult, fuelled by his strong commitment to the work ethic, clearly gets little support from his present environment.

Graham's work consists of cutting various wooden components for dispatch to local furniture factories and he is grateful to have been placed in what he considers to be the most skilled, interesting section of the workshop. His workmates are on the whole congenial company and there is some job satisfaction in building up speed and doing the work efficiently. What is lacking, however, is any prospect of promotion or advancement. Foremen are appointed on length of service and Graham's present supervisory staff are a good twenty years older than him.

Graham's ideal employment would be in the electronic wiring trade -- he would enjoy the detail of the work and being involved in making "something that worked". However, his chances of a change seem slight and what he saw from the start as "a last resort job" may well turn out to be his only opportunity for paid employment. He lives in an area of high unemployment, has no qualifications and appears to get little encouragement from his employment placement service. His dissatisfaction with his job is heightened by the very experience of having "been away" to college, as distinct from his fellow workers who accept the conditions because "they don't know any better".

Social and Personal Life

Graham's spare time is spent entirely with his family -- a more varied lifestyle is impossible with their extremely limited budget. He would, for example, like to develop his interest in photography but cannot afford it. All the family income is accounted for -- rent, food, services, hire-purchase payments and essential goods such as clothing -- and there is little available for extras. He walks to work to save money and recalls that he and his wife have been out for an evening only twice since they married.

He is proud of the comfortable three-bedroom house rented from the Council and enjoys the time he spends with his wife and child. He delights in his growing daughter and plays a considerable part in her care. He spends one evening a week at an Adult Literacy class and usually goes out with his father for a drink on Sunday when they have been to church.

THE FUTURE FOR BOTH GRAHAM AND JESSICA

Sadly, their opportunities for further development seem limited. Their education in school provided both of them with negative experiences and only a limited range of life and literacy skills. An opportunity to develop academically was provided by the Further Education Unit, though both still have unmet needs in this respect. On the Further Education course, they had valuable social and personal experiences and gained independence and maturity. But neither gained from the experience in terms of employment and indeed their taste of other possibilities may have served only to heighten their discontent. The feelings of failure with which both left the college are still clearly evident.

They worry about their financial situation and are adamant that if it were not for Jessica's mobility allowance, they would not be able to pay many of their bills and would not have been able to marry. Graham is quick to point out the economic cycle that low-paid workers enter. There is no opportunity to save for capital expenditure so everything has to come from hire-purchase or loans. He is resentful of the fact that when they have a small lump sum such as the mobility allowance or rent rebate, they are never able to "let go" and spend a little as they please -- every penny is already accounted for.

Jessica is hopeful of finding employment soon and with an extra income, some "non-essentials" such as outings and evening entertainments may be possible. Jessica feels her present isolation keenly and would welcome the opportunity for social contacts which a job would offer -- Beatrice could be cared for by her grandmother who starts work herself at 4.00 p.m. Both would like a larger family but would be unable to cope with the extra cost of another child.

As to their thoughts for Beatrice herself: her phase of total dependency has been managed and her activities will cause less concern for her safety as her comprehension and language skills develop. It is in the emotional and social spheres that her needs will grow.

For the present, her world centres on her parents. But as her horizons widen, her awareness of herself as a child of disabled parents will develop, and Jessica and her husband know only too well of the ignorance that allows people to think of them as mentally disabled. (Beatrice's father's place of work is referred to locally as the "nut house"). Jessica's awkwardness in walking has caused strangers to make fun, Graham's hunched shoulders and large chest resemble those of a popular character in a children's television programme -- a source of amusement to the local children. It is into this milieu that Beatrice will pass when her preschool days begin.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Variety of Disablement

Lesley, Martin, Jessica and Graham are individuals in their own right who have very little in common. They remind us once again that disabled people are people first and disabled second. There are so many pressures from society's institutions and individuals' attitudes, towards a view of the "disabled" as some kind of homogeneous group, that it is good to be presented here with four disabled young people who are so very different from each other.

Not only are they disabled in different ways but, more importantly, they have responded to their situation in highly individual ways. Lesley and Martin are both living at home with their parents and likely to continue to do so. Lesley accepts the constraints and limited life options set by a severe physical disability; she is remarkably free of frustration and is content with the life and lifestyle available to her. Martin is socially isolated and faces an uncertain employment future; he is anxious on both scores but seems unlikely to take effective action in either case.

Jessica and Graham face a common future from very different vantage points. Jessica with her difficulty in walking and inability to get up if she falls is considerably more housebound than young mothers in her position generally are. The joy of giving birth to a physically perfect child is something she shares with her husband but the daily care and constant reminders of her disability that this brings are hers alone. Graham for his part faces a future of low-paid and unrewarding employment. He is frustrated at having to work below what he believes to be his true capacity, but is trapped by his own limitations and the need to provide for his wife and child.

Schooling

None of the four seems to have received a particularly good education, whether in special or ordinary schools. In several cases, a major benefit of going to St. Loye's was the improvement in general education, as distinct from any vocational training received. This raises an issue which is more fundamental than the integration/segregation issue. People who are disabled or suffer from learning difficulties of whatever kind have greater need, not less, of a good education. This education should of course be provided in a mainstream context wherever possible, but considerations of location should not detract attention from the quality of the educational provision on offer. In this context, the low standards and expectations of special schools and the lack of effective teaching in ordinary schools are equally unsatisfactory: both represent a failure to assist young people in their development, and serve to limit their life chances.

The transition points in young people's educational careers are important but problematic. Martin's life, for example, has been punctuated by a series of difficult transitions. Each move has been fraught and his parents have felt considerable anxiety about the consequences of their decisions. The transition from primary to secondary schooling was a common source of concern. This is well illustrated by Lesley's case, where her parents had great difficulty in finding a suitable secondary school for her.

The transition from compulsory schooling to post-school provision can be a hit or miss affair. Martin's well informed and educated parents heard about St. Loye's by chance. Both Graham and Jessica believe they were misinformed about the provision on offer there and were bitterly disappointed at leaving St. Loye's without any qualifications.

Work

All four want to work. With the exception of Jessica who is a full-time housewife and mother, the others are all in paid employment. The notion of "significant living without work" is not something that appeals to any of them. Though engaged in low-level and relatively poorly-paid work, they find this preferable to not working -- even if the latter meant that they were financially better off.

This must be borne in mind when considering alternatives to conventional paid employment for disabled people. High levels of unemployment in many countries and the changing nature of job opportunities in general may mean that disabled people find it even more difficult to obtain jobs, but that

does not stop them wanting them. A striking feature of the four young people here was the conventional nature of their aspirations -- marriage, domesticity, a steady job. Perhaps this is not surprising: conventional aspirations provide a familiar structure that can be a source of reassurance to people who face a constant threat of being pushed to the margins of society.

If alternatives to paid employment are to become an acceptable option for disabled people, this can only be after other people have first selected them. Unemployment is still for the most part a negative option in our societies: people do not choose it but rather have it thrust upon them. As long as this situation continues, developing alternatives to paid employment for disabled people will be perceived by them as unwelcome discrimination. Moreover, in addition to marginalising them further within society, it deprives them of the framework of familiar everyday goals and achievements.

The Future

Just as the four are individuals and have responded to their situation in different ways, so their futures are equally likely to be varied. All suffer from limitations but they are not the same limitations, and their lives will not unfold according to some "handicapped pattern". Jessica and Graham are the most concerned about the future, as might be expected given that they are parents: their daughter is more than one year old and developing rapidly. Apart from the financial worries that face any low-income family, they as disabled parents must bring up a child who is developing normally in every way. This is a novel situation by any standards. There are few precedents to draw on, certainly none that they know anything of, and their family life together will, in a small but significant way, be creating a new social pattern.

Martin is a sad young man, his limitations and social gracelessness accentuated by the cultural level and relative affluence of his family. His social isolation and his frustration, unfocused but real enough, seem likely to last for a long time to come.

Lesley, on the other hand, is a striking example of somebody who has come to terms with a handicapping condition and is leading a contented life within the constraints imposed by it. Being confined to a wheelchair is a simple fact of existence as far as she is concerned; it cannot be ignored but likewise, she does not give it a great deal of thought. Her life is set within constraints imposed by her disability and her future will be constrained in the same way. These are matters that concern her little however: she enjoys her life now and is vaguely cheerful about the future but gives as little thought to it as she does to her disability.

V

FRANCE: SOCIAL AND VOCATIONAL PROFILES OF SIX SPECIAL SCHOOL LEAVERS IN THE PARIS REGION

from contributions by

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I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In 1980, a study was initiated by a team of sociologists in the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique of a sample of handicapped young people who had received their schooling either in special classes for mildly or moderately retarded pupils administered by the Ministry of Education, or in special institutions of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs for deaf or blind children. The sample was intended to cover all special classes and institutions in the Val de Marne. For the purpose of the CERI Project, specific case studies were carried out with eight young people. Six of these will be related here.

The underlying purpose of the study was to take the Ministerial circular of 27th December 1967 that had been instrumental in creating the Special Education Section (SES) and examine whether in fact it caters for the population for whom it was intended (the mildly mentally retarded -- IQ in principle between 65 and 80 -- with no other important associated handicaps), and to see whether its purpose of integration had been achieved -- i.e. "giving disabled young people the necessary training for good integration in active life".

II. POPULATION SAMPLE AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

The subjects were chosen from young people born in 1958; this was to allow for a sufficient lapse of time between the end of compulsory schooling and finding a job. They were, therefore, at least 22 years old at the time of the interviews.

Data concerning the total special school leaving population was gathered from the files of the Departmental Commission for Special Education (CDES), an interdisciplinary committee responsible for assessment and placement of disabled children and youth. The following factors were found to characterise this population:

a) Of the 430 subjects in the sample, 56 per cent were boys and 44 per cent were girls. This was found to be representative of other samples of special school leavers where boys outnumber girls;

b) Of the 305 pupils whose nationality was identified, 16.4 per cent were of foreign descent, that is Algerian, Portuguese or Italian. On the national level, there are 15 per cent foreign children in special classes as compared to 5.3 per cent in ordinary classes of the lower secondary system.

c) Half of the population came from large families, that is with more than five children. Corresponding "normal" figures were 26.1 per cent for the same year; 75 per cent came from two-parent families whereas 23 per cent were children either of single-parent families, orphans or in foster homes.

d) As to professional status of fathers, 61.04 per cent were children of labourers, and 6 per cent managerial professions. Corresponding percentages from the normal population are 38.8 per cent from working class backgrounds. On the other hand, 63 per cent of mothers were not working as opposed to 66 per cent found in the normal population.

e) 68.8 per cent of students were already receiving special education during the years of primary education, of whom 62.6 per cent were in special classes, and 6.2 per cent were in specialised medical institutions; 5.6 per cent came from another Special Education Section at lower secondary level and 22.2 per cent came from normal classes, which means that they were assessed for the first time at the end of primary school and were found to be retarded.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

According to the official circular, the Special Education Section is designed to take mildly mentally retarded students, and the Ecole Nationale de Perfectionnement (ENP) mildly and moderately retarded. The sample revealed that 58.5 per cent of students were mildly retarded, whereas 4 per cent were profoundly retarded and 18.9 per cent were moderately retarded. According to

the rules, this latter group does not belong in an SES. On the other hand, 18.6 per cent of the sample had an IQ of 80 or above, and should not, in principle, have been placed in it.

The assessment and recruitment for the ENP seemed to follow the guidelines more closely, as 77.2 per cent of the sample were mildly or moderately retarded. On the other hand, 13.6 per cent were classed as profoundly retarded and 9 per cent with an IQ of 80 or above.

As most of the subjects had been given the Wisc IQ test, it was possible to compare the verbal part of the test with the performance part. The differences observed were striking: practically all subjects obtained a higher IQ on performance as opposed to the verbal tests, especially the SES population. In fact, more than half (53.5 per cent) of SES students obtained 80 or more on performance, whereas only 12 per cent obtained the same quotient on the verbal test. This would seem to indicate that retardation for the majority of these children is more linked to social factors and school curriculum than to actual individual handicapping conditions.

HANDICAPS AND DIFFICULTIES

Files indicating the type of handicap that had been diagnosed by the Special Education Committee gave us precise information on the appreciations and judgements that influenced the assessments of this group of young people. These covered 306 youths, that is 71.2 per cent of the total sample. Of them, 179, or 58.4 per cent, were classed as slow learners. About one-half of these had had to repeat years in primary school and were considered to be seriously enough behind to need special education.

Only 65 students (21.3 per cent) were categorised as having "behaviour problems" and in eight out of ten cases, these were considered to be mild problems such as inhibition or opposition.

Sixty students were classed as "social cases" (19.5 per cent) with difficulties linked to family life.

Another category, "elective difficulties" groups together several difficulties, such as those of language, reading, writing, arithmetic, psycho-motor or spatio-temporal problems. Of the sample, 143 subjects were classed within this category (46.7 per cent). Of these, nearly half concerned language and reading.

Adolescents with specific handicaps were few: four had significant motor difficulties, six were indicated as being sensorally handicapped, eight suffered from serious medical disorders such as epilepsy, diabetes or heart trouble.

To sum up, the sample population of youth attending the Special Education Section or the Ecole Nationale de Perfectionnement may be described as belonging to low social class families, from large families and characterised by school failure, often at very early stages, causing behaviour and personality problems. The overall picture is one of lack of adaptation to the school structure, rather than "true retardation or handicap".

SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL PROFILES

The young people interviewed were, as we have said, 23 years old. Most had left special school at 16 which means that at the time of our investigation they had been in active life for seven years. Many had lost contact with the school. It was difficult, therefore, to obtain profiles for the whole sample. Of the 430 subjects in the total sample population, it was possible to obtain long-term profiles for 174 (40.4 per cent) and recent profiles for 68 (15.81 per cent).

Of those for whom information was available, the employment position was this:

Employed	85 males + 66 females =	151 (86.8%)
Unemployed	2 males + 3 females =	5 (2.9%)
Further training	4 males + 8 females =	12 (6.9%)
Sheltered workshops	3 males + 3 females =	6 (3.4%)
		174 (100%)

Type of Employment

Vocational training choices available to boys in the SES and ENP are limited to two or three from a range of mechanics, wood work, plumbing, metal work and painting; for girls, it is mostly just cafeteria work or industrial sewing.

Of the young people we were able to trace, 24.7 per cent (43 out of 174) were employed in a job related to their training. This means that three-quarters of the young people entering the job market find work that has nothing to do with their vocational training. Nor does this necessarily mean that the others remained employed in their chosen field. In fact, of the sample (68 youth) whose recent employment is known, only 22 are in jobs related to their vocational training.

The largest number of the young people (male and female) found jobs as unskilled workers. For some, this meant working in a field with which they were familiar through vocational training, but these were rare cases. The small number of skilled workers (three) is to be especially noted.

Those who went into apprenticeship represent one quarter of the male population. This work also rarely corresponded to vocational training. Of the seven girls in apprenticeship, six were in hairdressing, which is not included in the vocational training curriculum.

Becoming a saleswoman seems to be an important opportunity for girls, and again is not part of the curriculum for vocational training.

Service personnel represents 9.4 per cent of jobs for males and 11.76 per cent for females. For boys, this usually means being employed by the commune to do odd jobs, for girls, work in school cafeterias, cleaning

jobs in hospitals, schools, and the like. It must be stressed here that in the majority of the Special Education Sections, there is a branch of training for employment in the public services, but that few young people actually find jobs in this field. The SES curriculum certainly needs to become more adapted to the reality of the labour market.

Table 10

EMPLOYMENT TAKEN UP BY MEMBERS OF THE SAMPLE

Employment	Male		Female		Total
Manual Workers	7	8.23%	2	3.03%	9
Apprentice	22	25.88%	7	10.60%	29
Unskilled Worker	41	48.23%	22	33.33%	63
Skilled Worker	1	1.17%	2	3.03%	3
Service Personnel	8	9.40%	10	11.76%	18
Sales	3	3.52%	21	31.81%	24
Other	3	3.55%	2	3.03%	5
Total	85	100%	66	100%	151

III. THE CASE STUDIES

At the beginning of 1981, the research team sent a questionnaire to all young people who had entered the Special Education Section or the Ecole Nationale de Perfectionnement in the Val de Marne in 1970-71, requesting information concerning their present situation as well as a personal appreciation of their schooling. Very few replied, and a smaller number agreed to be interviewed. The case descriptions that follow are a selection of those who were.

Although these young people are still in their early twenties, the lives of most of them are already marred by early difficulties, by unemployment, illness, death; only in the rarer cases, are there signs of a happier existence.

The interviews centred on two main questions: were their school experiences at the SES positive? Did they help them to become integrated in work? The memories these young people have of their schooling are not very glowing: they learned little, and what they actually did has been of very little use in their activities since.

As to vocational training and finding employment, the picture is no more encouraging. As one of them said, and it reflects the others' opinions

too, "To find work, you have to make it on your own, or with the help of your friends". The interviews reveal the importance of a network of relationships in this area, and make it very clear that unemployment is a constant menace. Some of the young people give the impression of still putting up a fight; others seem already beaten.

It must be realised that a number of the young people interviewed could hardly read. One can only blame the school system, therefore, for the difficulties they experienced on this account when trying to find work afterwards. One of the young men, unstable and a deviant, is now trying to learn to read; another instance of the school not having satisfied a pupil's needs.

STUDY No. 1: LOUIS P.

Personal Background

Louis was born in 1958, the single child of parents who separated in 1966. The mother was given legal custody of the child but she left the Paris area to remarry in Britany and the father, a foreman printer, then took responsibility for him.

Psychological tests in 1967 indicated a mental age of seven, a chronological age of nine (Binet-Simon). In 1969, he had a further (Wisc) test which gave an IQ of 68.

In 1969, when Louis was eleven, he was admitted as a boarder to a medico-pedagogical institute (IMP) at M. (Eure et Loir) "because of an important schooling handicap that developed at the time his parents separated, then divorced". At the end of his schooling there (when he was 13 1/2), "his reading ability was sub-syllabic; in arithmetic, his level was that of a first-year elementary course pupil" (second year of schooling in France). While at the IMP of M., his father visited him regularly and he spent holidays with the father and mother in turns.

During 1969, he was under individual psychotherapy and in 1970-71 in a collective group: "the oligophrenic evolution had been stopped by treatment and psychotherapy, and oriented towards a better-quality personality development" (excerpt from his psychological assessment in December 1971).

Louis then wished to return to his father who agreed to take him home and, according to the IMP doctor, he showed signs of co-operation.

In September 1972, Louis was transferred to the Ecole Nationale de Perfectionnement at B. (Val de Marne) where he stayed until January 1974. He then requested a transfer to Britany to be near his mother. This necessitated a report by his director which ran:

> Results obtained: Well below par in all subjects. His results in arithmetic (CE1) are, however, better than those in French. Makes no effort in the workshop. His excursions into painting and gardening yielded disappointing results, far below his ability.

Behaviour: Restless, unstable. Lively in class, because his capabilities are above those of the group as a whole. But this quickly shifts into disruption, teasing and childish behaviour.

In the workshop he seemed much less interested in the second year. His assessments at the end of the first year were satisfactory and pointed to fair success in building trades. At his request, he was assigned to the paint workshop. Grew tired of it and one day asked to join gardening. There his chief concern was to avoid any effort, while appearing to know how to do things.

Conclusion: He needs to be set to a demanding apprenticeship (building trades) and the change of school should be taken as an opportunity for this. He needs to be materially obliged to work. Since his behaviour here was often arrogant and sometimes pretentious, he would no doubt be stimulated in a group where the level is higher.

Underlying the wish to join his mother is no doubt a wish for an easier life (his father is working all week and is not very well off whereas his mother has remarried into more comfortable circumstances). It will be important to ensure that, in spite of her new husband, the mother allows her son to visit regularly.

At Christmas 1973 (when Louis was 15 years old), his mother took him back, but trouble with his stepfather made it necessary for him to be removed and put back into education without delay. Three possible courses were considered: an SES in the town where the mother lived, an IMP, or an ENP in a nearby town, as a boarder. The last was chosen and Louis entered the ENP at X in early 1974. He stayed there until he was 18.

For this new move, Louis took further psychological tests, and the results were far more hopeful than earlier ones (IQ Wisc, overall = 84, verbal = 74, performance = 98). During the tests, Louis showed himself "motivated, studious, efficient". Intellectual efficiency was assessed as "sub-average-normal. The child will be able to take normal, low-level training, of the CET type."

Louis's education does not seem to have been satisfactory, however, because the sole record of his time at ENP in Britany, in two school reports from 1974, notes: "the occupational results are negative. From this standpoint, the school cannot be of use to him."

After Leaving

In February 1981, Louis telephoned following our letter asking him to get in touch. He agreed to come to the office for a discussion, arrived an hour late, and explained that he had started work that day in a new job, as a delivery rider for a courier service. He had come in between two errands. He had in fact had difficulty in finding our office and in this connection it came out that he was virtually unable to read and found his way only because he got to know Paris by going around a lot with friends, especially at night.

He was fairly tense when he came into the office, carrying his crash helmet. He was quite thin, unkempt, and seemed tired and in poor health. He spoke in bursts, impulsively, kept looking away, and seemed uneasy, as if on the run.

We started off talking about his earlier jobs: nightwatchman in a car park with a guard dog for three months, nightwatchman at the Printemps department store for a month, petrol pump attendant for three consecutive months. He had been unemployed for the last six months. He seemed to find it difficult to place these various jobs in time, and to remember how long each had lasted. He explained the changes of job by the lack of job interest, disagreements with employers, and transport costs. He showed his last payslips (from the petrol station) and complained about them, asking us what we thought. In his new job, where he was on trial, he was paid by the trip. He did not know if he would stay in the job, where he made eight francs for each delivery and had to work from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

It was clear that he worked spasmodically and in fact lived by his wits and perhaps some petty crime [he alluded, for instance, to trouble with the police about a camera found in a "poubelle" (literally, a dustbin but also slang for a car)]. At night, he roamed around Paris and picked things out of dustbins. We noted that he had an enormous bunch of keys of various kinds (house keys, car keys, etc.) although he had only a mobilette.

He was no longer living with his father, who he claimed had exerted strict control over his earnings, drawing much of them straight from the employer. He told us his father was applying for him to be accepted as a handicapped dependant in order -- according to Louis -- to collect the state benefit. His dealings with his father seemed to be uneasy; he said nothing about his mother.

Recollection of Schooling

Louis had virtually no memories of his time at school. His inability to read hampered him in daily life. At the SES he took the gardening course, but it had never been of any use to him. He told us he only learnt how to dig and rake. He had applied for a municipal gardener's job in Paris but had not been taken on because, in particular, he did not know the names of the plants. He felt that it would be far preferable if training took the form of an apprenticeship with an employer.

Social Circumstances

In 1981, Louis was living with an older woman (aged about 40) who was a checker in the clothing trade, where she had worked since she was 17. He got a little money (15 francs a day) from her when he was out of a job. She was teaching him to read.

He would like to be a dustman and had applied for a dustman's job with the Paris Council but according to him, foreigners were taken on in preference to French people (very aggressive talk about immigrant workers). The job would combine a reasonable wage with the possibility of satisfying his liking for picking up odds and ends.

He told us he had recently won some money with a friend on the Loto (a kind of lottery) and they were thinking of using the money to rent a garage where they could store the items they picked up.

He spoke a good deal of his liking for weapons, and of violent gang fights, over girls. He claimed to have weapons at his place, and to belong to a shooting club.

Louis appeared to be a very unstable, aggressive and no doubt Mitty-like person, on the fringe of delinquency (what he told us of his adventures indicated that he is very naive and easily manipulated).

He is an embittered young man, without prospects and without hope. When we asked him if he would like one day to have children, he replied "No! I went through too much myself when I was small."

STUDY No. 2: JULIETTE D.

Personal Background

Juliette is the eleventh of twelve children. Her father is an unskilled worker, and her mother has no outside occupation. Three of the children live away from home, and one died, aged 18, as the result of a car accident.

When her file was established in 1970, the family of ten people in all was living in a five-room flat in a large, low-cost housing development in the Paris suburbs. The social worker ended her report in these terms: "nice child -- affectionate -- very willing to help -- the family appears very united -- all the children have had educational difficulties". The family background was described in these terms: "family with 12 children -- parents aged 53 and 50 -- good affective atmosphere but largely non-cultural environment where all the children have had educational difficulties."

Education

After attending kindergarten, Juliette went to primary school. She had difficulties right from the first year (CP) of primary education; when she had repeated that class, the teacher noted: "child with little intellectual potential. Cannot read after taking the first year a second time round."

She then went into the second year class (CE1), after which she was put into a remedial class where she remained for four years. At age 13, her teacher noted in the Special Education Section orientation file that "she can read readily, with expression, and can spell normally. She knows how to do mathematical operations."

All the primary teachers mentioned that Juliette was a "nice and affectionate child, helpful, a good classmate".

After the psychological tests (Wisc IQ, overall = 75, verbal = 64, performance = 92), the psychologist noted: "passive child, little motivation -- overweight, but replies willingly: language is very, very poor -- cannot express herself correctly. All academic knowledge: nil. At the same time, capable of logical reasoning and analysis." The reference to a verbal handicap is surprising; it is the only time that we find such a deficiency mentioned. Since the first year of primary school, in fact, Juliette was given an A or B for oral expression by a succession of teachers.

Yet it was the psychologist's view that prevailed since the Centre Médico-Pédagogique decision on orientation says: "seriously backward educationally. Severe verbal handicap (our emphasis). Will undoubtedly be better in SES than in the normal classes."

In the Special Education Section, Juliette was a good pupil. She first did sewing, and then went into the packaging section. In June 1973, she was assessed in these terms: "steady pupil, with a great capacity for work. Juliette readily listens to and accepts what adults say. Very co-operative, prefers collective activities where she can express herself in a small group of friends. Takes care over her dress and her work. Somewhat slow, sacrificing efficiency to presentation. Everyone in the SES likes her, a good classmate. Sometimes rough when playing, but without malice. Tends to be very excited towards the end of the day."

Interview

Juliette answered our initial letter and we made an appointment: she preferred an interview with us rather than replying to the questionnaire in writing. She asked us to come to her home on 23rd April at 2.30 p.m.

Juliette was living in a flat in a large low-cost housing development. The flat was warm and attractive. Juliette was a happy and appealing young woman: she welcomed us and offered us a cup of coffee. In the living room where we sat down, a young woman friend and her daughter were watching television; a teenager was dozing on the sofa. We started the interview: Juliette was six months pregnant and was living with an older man (about 40 to 45) whose wife had left him with five children, aged between 8 and 17, to look after. The eldest was the boy on the sofa: he had been unemployed since leaving school. Juliette's man used to be a skilled hand in a printing works, but it had closed; after some time out of work, without finding a job in his particular field, he was then working as a local council employee (earning half his previous wage).

Recollection of Schooling

We talked about her primary education. She had no fond memories of her early days at school: she said her CP teacher had taken a dislike to her, took no notice of her and left her at the back of the classroom. She remembered having great difficulty with reading. On the other hand, she looked back happily on her move into the remedial class. She told us she had been taught to read by her remedial teacher, with whom she had remained on friendly terms. Juliette was in fact seeing her regularly since her man's youngest children were in the same remedial class under the same teacher.

She told us little about her schooling in the Special Education Section except that she did sewing, followed by packaging and enjoyed herself there. But she remembered most of her classmates and gave us useful details about some of them with whom she had not lost touch. She left the SES at age 16, with a form of certificate.

After Leaving

Off her own bat, she straight away found a job as a salesgirl in a baker's shop, staying two and a half years there. She liked the job, but had to give up because of health problems: being on her feet was not good for her back and she had to have three months' treatment.

She then found a job in a grocer's shop as a salesgirl, for a fortnight, but the shop then closed. Two days later, she found a job in a firm engaged in cleaning and retouching leather clothing, where she had worked as a trainee during her time in the SES. She had been in the cleaning department, where she handled toxic products and had to undergo precautionary medical tests every month (including blood and urine tests). She was dismissed after four years' work as the result of a dispute with a superior. She was unemployed for two and a half months and then worked for a fortnight as a cleaning woman in a food store, where she was underpaid (ten francs an hour, in late 1979).

Following that, she was hired on a trial basis in an electronics company but she was required to do painstaking work, on very small components, at a work rate that was beyond her: she was turned down after the trial period. She told us that she liked painstaking work but had not been able to adjust to the fast pace. After that, she was taken on by a firm making light bulbs. She was pleased with the job, where she earned a net 3 000 francs a month for a 40-hour week, with one afternoon off. She was thinking about a special course on glass, which the manager had suggested, during working hours.

When she became pregnant, however, she had to give the job up temporarily since handling mercury could be dangerous for the unborn child. She was not currently on sick leave or registered as unemployed but was hoping to get her job back after the birth, because the firm had been pleased with her.

Juliette seemed fairly well satisfied with her lot. She expressed herself easily, told us that she liked to read popular science publications and to watch medical programmes in particular on television. She appeared to assume her numerous family duties with good humour.

Her man came back from work, together with his brother and nephew. We stayed for a short time talking about school in general, unemployment, the forthcoming presidential elections, etc. The conversation was lively, and the atmosphere friendly. Quite clearly, their flat was a welcoming one and neighbours, friends and members of the family readily dropped in.

STUDY No. 3: CHARLES C.

Personal Background

No information was available about Charles's primary schooling except that before he entered the Special Education Section, at age twelve, he was in a primary remedial class.

Charles's file in the SES reveals that his twin brother died at the age of seven months, and there was a younger sister. His parents separated in 1965. According to a psychologist's report of 1967, there was "substantial conjugal disagreement leading to divorce (violent scenes, drinking by the father, intolerance of the child, who was beaten a lot during his first two years of life)". When the parents separated the children were entrusted to the mother, who lived on and off with a man by whom she had a child. The man could not stand Charles. His mother took him to see a psychologist in April 1965 (when he was six years and eight months old), "for behavioural disturbances making him totally unsuited to school and hard to bear at home...The picture painted by the mother is fairly gloomy... By Terman's test, Charles has an IQ of 85..."

The psychologist concluded that he was a "child with an extremely disturbed past -- virtually normal in level -- in danger of becoming psychotic. This raises considerable problems in the family because he requires continual supervision. His mother may need help too since she is unable to cope with this difficult child whom she is beginning -- so she says -- to find hard to stand."

This examination led to Charles being placed in an observation centre, "Le Coteau", at V. in September 1965. While he was there (1966), his mother went off and his maternal great-grandmother took over responsibility for the children (Charles was still a boarder at the observation centre), but she died in the same year and the children were then entrusted to their paternal grandparents.

Charles left Le Coteau in 1967, when he was nine. There is every indication that he went back to primary schooling, entering a remedial class and staying there until he went to the Special Education Section in 1970, aged twelve.

At the Special Education Section

At the SES, Charles entered the sixth year of education (6ème). A month after joining, he was considered to have the overall education level of a second-year pupil (CE1) but, his teacher added, "Charles is very good verbally". Reading was normal, but without expression and oral expression was excellent.

Family problems were mentioned as being particularly significant. But Charles got on well with his grandparents and his sister: they were living in a small detached house with a garden.

During this period, Charles went to a Centre Médico-Psycho-Pédagogique for remedial orthophonics and psychotherapy. During an interview, he told the psychologist that he had no mother, that she had abandoned him. He never thought of her, "she killed my twin brother"; he also said that his mother used to hit his sister on the arms with the heel of her shoe. He did not want to see her again, she beat him too much. His father, who was a hospital orderly, also lived with the grandparents; according to Charles, he was always drunk.

Life and Work in 1980

Charles agreed by telephone to come to the office for an interview. We were expecting to see a fairly disturbed young man but the good-looking person who came in was confident, relaxed, pleasant and friendly.

He started off by saying that it had been easy to come and see us because he was on holiday for the time being. He was a fisherman and worked on a deep-sea vessel, fishing off Newfoundland, Africa or Norway. He made two trips a year, each lasting between four and four and a half months, making eight to nine months at sea with the rest of the year off. He generally spent his holidays in the suburbs of Paris where he lived with his grandmother, his sister (now a nurse) and his father.

He readily spoke about his work, in detail and at length. He had already managed to save around 150 000 francs. He liked what he was doing and found the atmosphere on board pleasant. He knew his work very well and seemed very well informed, too, about fishing matters, not just as regards the firm he worked for but also regulations and the international economic issues. At present, he was a factory hand and he intended to become a factory foreman. He knew all about the seamen's union but was not a member because he was unable to attend the meetings. He was on the electoral register and voted by proxy.

Recollections of the Past

In speaking about his childhood, Charles confirmed that it had not been easy. His memories were fairly vague, but he still seemed greatly marked by certain painful episodes -- particularly the death of his twin brother and being abandoned by his mother.

As to his education, he did not remember primary school, but his memories of the Special Education Section (when he was between twelve and fifteen) were not good. "I didn't learn anything there. I didn't want to work at it." He had some training in woodwork, ironwork and at the forge.

When he was 15, his cousins, who themselves were seamen, advised him to enrol at the seamen's school at St. Malo: his grandmother gave him strong encouragement. The education he received was general and technical and he was awarded a maritime proficiency certificate (CAM) on leaving. He talked about the school with pleasure: he said it had taught him all he knew. He considered it a great advantage that the technical courses were taught by former professional seamen. In his view, from about age 13 to 14 pupils could usefully follow practical rather than theoretical courses and spend time in

factories as trainees. In this connection, he gave his sister as an example; she had done a pre-apprenticeship course before entering nursing college.

When he left the school at St. Malo, he did his military service in Africa, in the Navy, as a dockhand. He then started work as a fisherman. In that period, he went on a scientific expedition prospecting around the coast of Africa to identify species of fish that could replace the types normally eaten whose numbers were dwindling. With his early earnings, he was able to learn to drive. During his second year, he was laid off for seven months but he had always been in work since then.

Thoughts for the Future

Although fully alive to the current danger of being laid off, on account of the increasingly difficult conditions for fishing in France, Charles was not worried about his future: he had several possibilities in mind if he lost his job. He could well switch to merchant shipping: his certificate would not be of any use ashore unless he did a course in ironwork and smithing that would help him find work, still connected with the sea. Otherwise, he would consider taking a forestry certificate with a view to working in the Dordogne where his grandmother had a house.

Charles's life seemed well organised; he was saving, thinking of buying a car and restoring the house in the Dordogne, and making plans for a different trade if need be. He seemed very attached to his sister and his grandmother; the latter, still doing cleaning work, would soon reach retirement age and hoped to settle in the Dordogne. On the other hand, he made little mention of his father, who was still working in a hospital and still drank. Charles spent all his leave with his grandmother and his sister. Long sea journeys did not promote ties of friendship or romance: Charles had very few mates and did not go out very much.

He could imagine getting married and having children, but only when he had given up the sea. Everything about him points to a quest for the stability that he so much lacked when young: he was doing everything he could to achieve the aims that he set for himself. It was a long way from the "pre-psychotic" boy, shuttled around and abandoned, to the determined, optimistic and confident young man whom we met.

STUDY No. 4: LUCAS J.

Personal Background

Lucas is the elder of two children. At the time of his entry to the SES (1972), his father, a plasterer, was on extended sick leave and his mother was doing temporary work (unspecified). His SES file says little about his previous education except that he attended a primary school, repeating several classes. Later, from 1967 to 1970, he attended the day hospital at G.; the reasons are not stated.

In September 1970, when he was twelve, he entered a remedial class in the first year of secondary school (6ème), and after a further year, he was directed to the Special Education Section.

His educational level was assessed as very low in all subjects and the welfare worker's report at this time concludes with the words: "family with little education background. Lucas, in the absence of his father who has until recently often been away working, roams about with his friends; petty theft seems likely. Little interest in the academic work of a 5ème class, whose level was too high for him. Mother drinks? ..."

The medical record mentions that Lucas had "personality disturbances" and was having remedial instruction in reading and spelling.

In 1970, while at G. day hospital, he took the Wisc test showing an IQ of 80 (verbal = 74, performance = 90). For the 1972 orientation, the following notes were made: "test not repeated, since the condition does not appear evolutionary with regard to intellectual level. A few relational difficulties during the interview, however, due largely to the fact that the child's profound wish is to remain with his parents as a day pupil ... Intellectual development hampered particularly by circumstances in the family circle, since many problems remain."

It would seem that at this period the question of putting Lucas in a boarding school was considered -- it is not clear on whose recommendation. Lucas, however, certainly wished to stay with his parents. The psychologist noted that he was "very keen to find a class suited to his level where he could continue as a day pupil". Lucas's mental condition seemed to give much concern to the guidance workers who stated that if he went to the SES he would be monitored by the Child Mental Health Unit at G.

Interview in 1981 -- Age 23

Lucas telephoned us in response to our letter and asked us to call on him at home after work. He was living with his father in a three-room flat in a low-cost housing block, in the centre of a town in the suburbs. With its small church and surrounding streets, the area has retained an old-style appearance.

Lucas was tall and thin, with a childlike appearance. He was most welcoming and friendly. He took us into the living room and offered a drink. The flat was sunny, pleasant, tidy, well kept and carefully decorated.

Lucas answered our questions very readily and told us about his family. He was then living with his father who was disabled, and for the last three years had been receiving a disability pension, following an aorta operation. His mother had died a year before, of cancer. His younger brother was also dead, but Lucas did not explain further.

Recollection of Schooling

Lucas remembered little about primary school: he had repeated some classes but did not recall which ones. On the subject of school, his replies

always related to the Special Education Section. Only after some insistence, did he tell us: "I didn't learn anything at G., I was left at the back of the class. I was six years old, I found learning hard, I couldn't remember anything.... Mind you, there were forty children in a class; they can't look after forty children."

Talking about the SES, he said he had not been very good on the mechanical engineering side but had been at woodwork. He regretted there had only been two types of workshops: "there is not enough choice at school". He would have liked there to be a masonry shop: "quite a lot of children would like to learn masonry". But he did remember one of his teachers kindly: "I didn't learn anything at school. It was hard for me. F. was the only teacher who was decent, she was a nice girl. I went to see her six months ago." Throughout the discussion, Lucas showed awareness of his education difficulties: "I can read, but I make mistakes. I can write."

After School

On leaving the Special Education Section, Lucas worked as a plasterer's mate, unskilled (P1), in the same firm as his father. In fact, he spent three and a half years as a plasterer and would have entered the semi-skilled category (P2) but work declined and he became unemployed. Then, through a friend, he found a job with the municipal undertakers: "I did everything, even grave digging. I was there three months, then I fell ill. They sacked me. I had to sign a piece of paper saying I wasn't being sacked, I was leaving because I was ill."

For 18 months Lucas, suffering from Hodgkin's disease, was recognised as wholly dependent by the social security authorities. He had an operation, was in hospital care, and was still receiving treatment.

After his illness, he found a job as a roofer's mate. He was earning 3 500 francs a month. "I was lucky here, but things are starting to go badly. They are sacking some workers. I expect I'll be sacked in three or four months." His employer was paying for him to take the driving test for an HGV license: "That will open up some doors: I want to do that to travel... Some lorry drivers make 10 000 francs a month."

We asked him if he had done his military service. "I went absent without leave.... But since I had lost my brother and my mother was paralysed and 100 per cent disabled, they discharged me."

He had no car -- too expensive -- but he had a moped; he hadn't been away for a holiday for four years. Every weekend, he visited his grandmother, who was in a home. Before he became ill, he used to do karate and swimming. He now watched television a little, did not mention any friends and said he had no girlfriend.

Thoughts on Vocational Training and the World of Work

What struck us during the interview was the way he thought about what he was saying, and the clear value judgements he expressed about vocational training, the world of work and the current state of society. "It's a good

thing to give young people training at school, provided they come out of it with a certificate, otherwise employers won't take them on. If there is no certificate, there is no point."

Talking about vocational training for adults, he commented: "You have to wait three or four years. There are hundreds of thousands of young people waiting. Some young people just don't want to work... They don't want to get their hands dirty. The unemployment scheme doesn't help; you have to wait two months before collecting any benefit. Some people stay on unemployment benefit afterwards, they are layabouts, they don't want to work.... Some people just let themselves go. There are an awful lot of young dropouts. They don't want any kind of hard work.... You've got to be a bit racist, why don't they kick out some of these foreigners? Now it is the Vietnamese who are coming in."

In spite of the tragic events that he has lived through, Lucas still gives the impression of being very optimistic and, above all, a fighter. He did not appear to have any difficulty in the unusual type of relationship posed by the interview. Nothing in his attitude or way of speaking indicated even the slightest deficiency.

STUDY No. 5: CORINNE L.

We have difficulty with this case study, there being no SES file on Corinne's earlier life. Our only information has been derived from an interview with her and her mother in June 1981.

They live in a small house in the suburbs. Mrs. L. opened the door to us and introduced her daughter who seemed far younger than her real age of 22 -- she looked about 14.

All of us except Corinne sat at a table in the living room; she remained standing throughout and hardly spoke at all, in spite of our efforts. Whenever we put a question directly to her, her mother answered; yet, the whole time, she looked happy and very interested.

Personal Background

Mrs. L. used to be an accounts secretary but had taken early retirement. Her husband, a workshop head in a furniture factory, had died a few years earlier.

Mrs. L. had three daughters, Corinne and "two older girls who are married".

Corinne went to kindergarten very early, at two and a half: "she didn't get on too badly but she was backward in speaking, because of her vaccination accident."

She went into the first class (CP) of primary school at seven. "At that time she was still a bit handicapped in speaking and then she had

difficulties with her movements, those have cleared up of course, so she didn't really follow very well in her class of 30 pupils, it wasn't really what she needed... The first year she was just left, the second as well, I think, and in the third year, she was moved into what they call the remedial classes... I call it shunting children aside."

Mrs. L. then showed us a report by the remedial teacher in whose class Corinne had spent two years. This said: "Fluent, expressive reading, full understanding of texts read to herself. Good spelling of ordinary words, very slow and problematic acquisition of operative mechanisms. Inability to solve a problem, even a very simple one. Many of her short essays on free subjects concern her life in the family and out of school."

The report continued: "She is shy but needs contacts, she often stays behind to chat in class breaks. She seems happy in class. Her adjustment took some time, a term at least; last year, she needed help from a group of classmates to integrate in the class. She continually needs a stimulus: otherwise she would spend long periods dreaming."

In 1972, when she was 14, Corinne went to a private school "which could help children with education problems to catch up. She kept up very well, everything was going fine, she was doing history and geography."

Then Mr. L. fell ill and died, and Mrs. L. could no longer afford the private school fees (900 francs a month).

Corinne then went into the Special Education Section, where she stayed from 15 to 17, although her mother tried unsuccessfully to find another orientation: "I couldn't find anything, though I did everything I could. The utterly ridiculous thing is that the handicap she had at the start has just dogged her."

In the SES, Corinne "did a lot of sewing, although she can't bear needlework, and a bit of cooking and domestic science, there was no other choice."

Further efforts to find a solution for Corinne were made when she left the SES. She entered a sheltered workshop [ARERAM (Association pour la rééducation psychomotrice des enfants et la réadaptation professionnelle des travailleurs atteints de déficience psychomotrice) Centre]; "where else could she go?" Corinne apparently did handling work there, without receiving any proper training. The work provided (packaging for beauty products) was unpaid. Finding no solution, neither a job nor proper training, Mrs. L. registered Corinne with the local Handicap Employment Commission (COTOREP). "Since I wasn't getting anywhere, I told them that she had had a vaccination accident and all the rest. I made sure that she at least got the special invalidity benefits for a few years."

At the COTOREP, she was tested and directed to an adult vocational training centre in the south-west of France. "Corinne wanted to go, but I knew what was going to happen, I knew it; anyway, we waited for this place at P. for 18 months. In May of last year (1980), I took Corinne to P. where there was a three-month course, a sort of preliminary trial course if you like, before... It was for kitchen and cleaning work and she was a bit disappointed right from the start, because she wanted to look after children.

Right, so it wasn't at all the sort of thing, and when we got there, I don't know what happened, she must have found herself at P. where she couldn't see her mother not even at the weekends or anything... All the young people there were from P. so on Fridays and Saturdays, well, she didn't know where she was, there was no one to look after her if you like. At any rate, two months later, they just sent her back to me saying no, she ought to be in a work therapy centre (CAT), she's not clever enough. That's what she was told..."

Mrs. L. refused to consider a place in a CAT and decided to look after Corinne herself, giving her schoolwork to do.

Mrs. L. contacted the ARERAM again: "automatically, without anything new at all, they suggested a CAT again." Corinne agreed to go because she didn't want to be any more trouble to her mother.

"I wasn't very keen on it and I went there one day, I came back quite ill, really depressed, it was unbelievable... She can integrate, I know she can, but there she was with young people who were really and truly very handicapped; listen, when I got out of there, we were both sick enough to cry when we got home in the evening; we just said this really is impossible. While we were there, one of them had an epileptic fit. This business of her being registered with the ARERAM keeps on coming back, she is aways regarded as handicapped and she is always being sent back to places like that."

Mrs. L. then enrolled Corinne in evening classes: "not a specialised course at all, she's with other adults who for one reason or another haven't been able to study, she's just like the rest. These are local authority classes for adults who want to learn a bit more, or get the elementary certificate; yes, she missed it by four marks."

Corinne was still attending these classes, although the distance she had to go was something of a problem. Mrs. L. was planning to enrol Corinne in a private Pigier school and was taking early steps to do so. "It may not do all that much for her, but it will mean that she'll have to get up every morning, go and take the underground or the train and she'll still be learning something, if only to fend for herself and to realize what work is all about."

Corinne was on the unemployment register, and had been for two years, and now, at the time of our writing, was continuing to receive invalidity benefit.

Discussion

Corinne's case seems hard to interpret, especially as we have no file. How much of her troubles are due to a genuine handicap, how much to the overprotective attitude of her mother? How far has her mother overestimated her capabilities? How much is due to institutional failings? Corinne undeniably seems to have genuine difficulties, but they are hard to place: are they really intellectual ones? There is some reason to doubt this. It seems to be an example of a person who is not properly placed in an institution for the seriously handicapped (of the CAT type) and who, through unfavourable circumstances, is rejected by the world of work although she could well have a place there.

"If people won't give her an initial step up, how can she be expected to manage and if she does not get any training, she will never be able to cope. Young people with school-leaving certificates can't find work, so how can she be expected to ...?"

"Why is no attention given to young people who have had problems but not irreversible ones? They are left as a burden on the community, although helping them could help everyone, including themselves. Do you think she likes it, being on benefit all the time? Not at all. And why are children like this rejected out of hand? Who can say a child will be no good? Some children may develop more slowly than others."

As the interview concluded, Mrs. L. repeated how alone she felt in tackling all these difficulties. "If only you knew how many doors I have tried... I'm worn out from knocking at doors and being given vague promises..."

STUDY No. 6: HECTOR R.

Hector was born in December 1958 in Portugal. We were unable to obtain a file on him and he did not answer the questionnaire that we sent. However, we were able to meet him at a get-together of former pupils of the Special Education Section at L.

When we arrived, he was at a table with three other boys whom he appeared to know very well. He explained that since his time in the SES, he had kept up regular contacts with some of his classmates; that was why he had come to the party.

Personal Background

He told us he had come to France with his parents at the age of seven. He spoke no French, of course, and was sent to a special school, whose name he had forgotten, to learn the language and to read and write. He stayed at the school until he was 13 or 14, but could remember little about it: he described it as a special school for foreigners, and he did learn to read and write there.

He entered the Special Education Section in L. at age 14, going into the woodwork workshop. He says that the SES principal considered him one of the best pupils at woodwork; his friends, sitting beside him, confirmed that "he was the best".

At 15 1/2, Hector was sent on a one-month training course in a woodworking firm, to complete his apprenticeship, but he stayed only two days. He preferred to go back to the SES because he missed his friends. He left at 16, without completing his apprenticeship since he failed to take the training course.

He told us that the things he particularly liked at the SES were the atmosphere and his friends, not what was taught there. Woodwork bored him: in his view, the SES classes and workshops were not interesting, even good pupils found it boring, and the training was no help in finding a job.

Present Position -- Age 22

Hector would have liked to work in a garage but he was very pleased with his current work, as a welder. He had worked for four years in the same firm and was earning about 4 500 francs, working for eight hours a day from 7.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. He stressed that finding a job had nothing to do with the time he had spent in the SES; he had found his current job through friends.

With his job, he could afford a flat of his own where he was living with a girl who worked as a clothing cutter. Hector felt he had done very well compared to many of the young people of his age whom he knew.

His parents had gone back to live in Portugal, but he had a brother who was also staying on in France, working as an electrician.

Hector explained that he had to make regular payments to the Portuguese Consulate at Nogent to avoid doing his military service, otherwise he would be compelled to go back to Portugal to serve since he had retained Portuguese nationality. He spoke very little about his country of origin, of which he had only hazy memories.

He told us that he liked travelling and said he had been to Angola and Belgium, these trips being paid for; he hoped to be able to go to the United States, and would like to visit the country on holiday.

He had friends, one of whom was also at the meeting and lived in the same block as he did. He spoke about friends helping one another (solidarity).

He had good memories of his time in the SES since it was there that he had met people who were still his friends. He said he had not answered our questionnaire because "what goes on in the SES doesn't interest me".

Hector bought Loto tickets and hoped to become a mechanic and perhaps have a garage.

Throughout our discussion, he emphasized that he did not think the vocational training in the SES was effective. He said one had to fend for one's self, or with the help of friends, to find a job because the SES held out no chance of finding work.

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